

COBALT-SERIES

伯爵と妖精

【あまい罠には気をつけて】

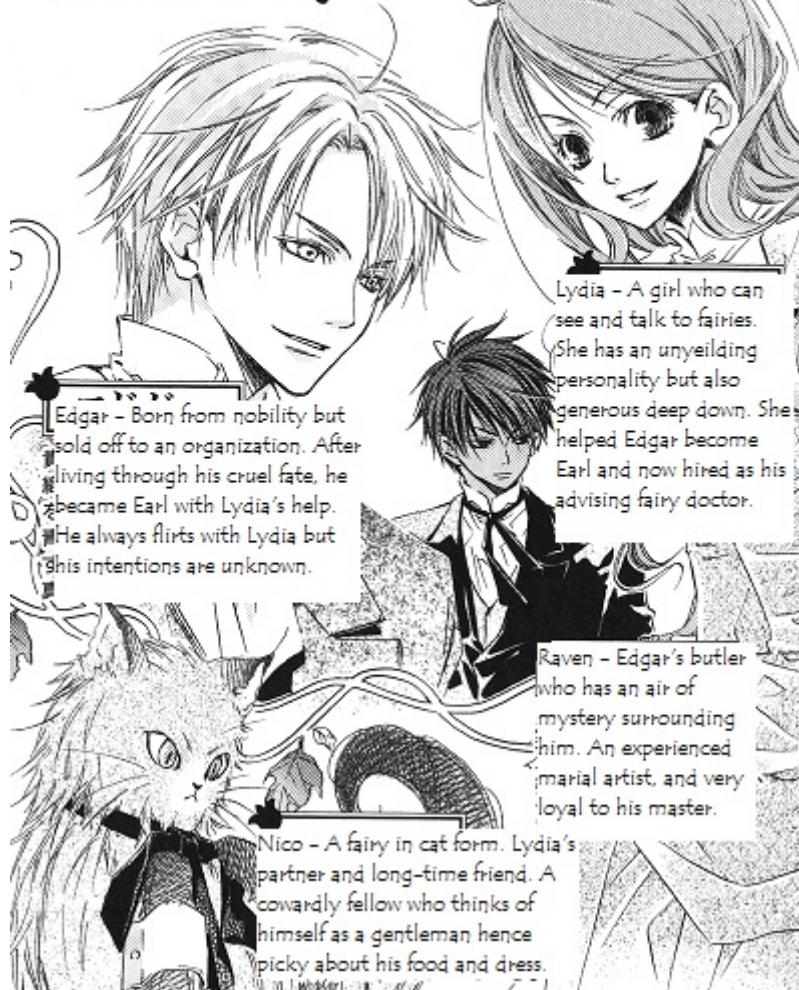
谷

瑞恵



伯爵と妖精

CHARACTERS.



Edgar - Born from nobility but sold off to an organization. After living through his cruel fate, he became Earl with Lydia's help. He always flirts with Lydia but his intentions are unknown.

Lydia - A girl who can see and talk to fairies. She has an unyielding personality but also generous deep down. She helped Edgar become Earl and now hired as his advising fairy doctor.

Raven - Edgar's butler who has an air of mystery surrounding him. An experienced martial artist, and very loyal to his master.

Nico - A fairy in cat form. Lydia's partner and long-time friend. A cowardly fellow who thinks of himself as a gentleman hence picky about his food and dress.



Graham - Doris and Rosalie's Uncle and ward. Seems he is flamboyantly fooling around within the ton.

Rosalie - Doris' cousin who both live together. She has a connection with a bogey beast.

Doris - A Baroness who one day went missing. Rumor that she was captured by the fogman...

translated by Nalya
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Chapter 1 - Beyond the darkness of the foggy city

“The fog has sure come out.”

The nervous young debutante, who was spoken to, lifted her head up that was faced down to take a quick peek out the window of the carriage they were riding.

The fog hung heavily around the city buildings, making the shape of the city structures vague and eery.

Her eyes recognized the Central Hall Cathedral, which stood tall and rising above the cluster of city buildings around it as the fog blurred its silhouette, making it almost appear like a giant was standing up and looking over the foggy city.

“It's nights like this that makes one think something dangerous could happen. It's not a day for a young lady like you to be waiting for a hack on the side of the road.”

The young girl took a modest, small glance at the source of the male voice who sat next to her, but quickly turned her focus back to her hands that were placed on her lap.

“Yes, you are right. I really didn't know what to do when I got separated from my maid. I can't thank you enough, my lord.”

“Oh, there is no need to be formal. I am so fortunate to be able to spend time with a charming young lady like you.”

“Oh, no, I...”

Even if she knew it was just flattery, she couldn't make her heart beat slow down. The shy girl wasn't able to lay her eyes on the owner of this carriage, which was grand on the inside as it was on the exterior.

This man, who possessed a rare personal beauty, was a young male peer that had just returned to London from overseas. His glistening golden hair and graceful stance gathered everyone's attention from afar. He was the talk of the

ton and said to charm the ladies and gentlemen and grabbed their attention with his smart, well-bred conversation. It was even near the Season, yet the hot rumor between the upper-class debutante daughters was always about this bachelor who hasn't even been in London for a month.

And yet it was unbelievable that the rumored Earl had remembered a girl like her, who although he had met her, he had hardly spoken to her, and happened to pass by her when she couldn't catch a coach, and offered to take her home. Some one as shy and reserved as her didn't really want to help out at the charity bazaar. For an upper class debutante daughter, it was one's duty to be involved in such charity activities and she was aware that this was kind of a housekeeping training for a future marriage, and just when she was beginning to think it couldn't get any worse, she was separated from her maid in the crowd, and the weather was turning sour.

The young girl stole another glance at the man next to her for another confirmation that this was indeed reality.

I wonder if Rosalie would be jealous, she thought, because she remembered her cousin's heated conversation: about how she had fallen in love at first sight with this earl.

"You're so reserved."

Even without lifting up her head to look, she could tell he was smiling softly at her.

"Or are you regretting getting onto a carriage of a man you barely know?" he asked.

"On, no, I would never... Because everyone says Earl Ashenbert is the finest gentleman."

"Rumors appear out of nowhere and disappear like the fog. No one really knows the truth and they aren't interested in it," he said and then unexpectedly leaned his body towards her, making her go stiff as a rock.

His supple fingers reached up to her coiffure.

But his fingers stopped just near the air around her locks and he pulled back his arm to reveal he was holding a tree leaf.

"Pardon me. This must have been blown by the wind."

Without thinking about what she was doing, she looked up and their eyes met. He gave her an impermeable, perfect smile but the young girl thought she saw some faint dark thing lurking behind them and shivered from fear of not knowing what she saw.

A man she hardly knew. He was right.

Even if he was a man with a prestigious family name and social position, she had no way of knowing if he was an honorable, true gentleman or not.

"They say there is evil lurking in the London fog. Are you aware of how many young girls and boys have been swallowed up and disappeared into this fog, Lady Doris?"

"N-No, I'm afraid not," she said and shook her head, still unable to take her eyes off of him.

"Please be careful, so that you are not swallowed up by the darkness."

The carriage wasn't moving anymore.

The coachman opened the door, and she let out of breath of relief seeing that they were in front of her house.

How silly of her to imagine that she would be dragged into the deep, dark fog.

But after she watched the Earl's carriage ride off down the street into the thick fog and out of sight, she could understand how people believed that man's lands were said to be located beyond the realms of the fog, in a different realm.

Lord Ashenbert's title was Earl of Ibrazel.

He is said to be the Lord of the Fairyworld.

"Doris, where have you been? Wasn't that Earl Ashenbert in that carriage just now?" said a young girl's voice from behind her.

"Rosalie! yes, uh."

Her cousin Rosaile was facing Doris in front of the gate of the house and she must have been watching since she was fuming with anger.

"Are you trying to gain an advantage over me?"

"No, I would never."

"Why aren't you looking me in the eyes? Have you been hiding something from me lately?"

"No, I'm not hiding anything," denied the young girl in a hast.

"Listen well, you will never be able to hide something from me. You had better not forgotten we swore an oath with a fairy."

"Of course."

"Then, tell me. What was that letter you were writing behind my back?"

"Yo-you were watching?!"

"What? Was it something that would trouble you if I saw it?"

Which means she hadn't read what was on it. Doris relaxed in relief, but that only angered Rosalie even further.

"Oh, you were hiding something from me! You haven't forgotten that if you break our oath, that the fairy would come and punish you?"

She remembered when the two of them made an oath together on the fairy. They made a promise, that as friends, they wouldn't keep secrets from one another. Her cousin said that if either one of them broke that promise, then the fogman would come to punish her.

"But, Rosalie, do you really think a fogman exists?"

"Of course it exists! Oh, I don't care about you anymore! I will not help you if something were to happen to you. It would be wonderful if you would be kidnapped by the fogman and disappear!"

The fogman. It was a fog fae that any London child would be told growing up. She wasn't at the age to believe fairytales, but she did believe some bit of it because it frightened her to no end.

The reason of her fear was because she witnessed the sight of a poor child who was captured by the fogman. It was only a vague, fragment of a memory of when she was a young child, but she was sure it wasn't a dream. Because of that memory, the name of the fogman was the embodiment of darkness, death and fear itself to her, even now.

She wondered what happens when someone is captured by the fogman.

As she watched her orange-haired cousin run off into the distance, she felt the isolation of being abandoned in the fog all by herself.



Mayfair-it was a renown district where it housed the properties of wealth and prestige in London. It one of its corners, was Edgar Ashenbert's castle-like town

house.

The young Earl, roughly around twenty, was said to have just returned to England, immediately bought the pale white building; and one of the rooms in it was Lydia's office.

As the private fairy doctor coerced into being hired by the earl family, it had been two weeks since this seventeen-year-old had started to commute to his residence.

Edgar had the title of an English earldom, as the fief lord of Ibrazel (fairyworld), however, he was not from the true bloodline of the Ashenbert family; just a man with an unknown birth and lineage. There seemed to be no mistake he was born from an aristocratic family, but he doesn't have a clue about faeries.

Just as most people were, he also couldn't see faeries or hear their voices, but fairies lived on the lands that he inherited as the earl and since they accept him as their overlord, he must have thought that problems would arise where he would need the help of a fairy doctor, and so he decided to hire Lydia.

From the era when faeries and humans lived hand-in-hand, a fairy doctor, someone with the knowledge of fairies and experience of trading with them existed, and their job was to maintain the peace between the two species.

However, now, in the 19th century, the existence of faeries was pushed into children's books, and everyone has forgotten that they were their neighbors. Even the existence of fairy doctors was thought of as rare.

That was why when Lydia opened her services as a fairy doctor in her hometown, there were hardly any job offers, and she was only treated as a freak. It was those kind of times, yet, she was officially hired as a fairy doctor.

It was easily said that this honorary position was unbefitting for someone as fresh and inexperienced as Lydia, but the reason she couldn't think herself fortunate and feel grateful was because of her employer and the face that she didn't know what he was thinking.

Like today, when she opened the door to the room that was supposedly her work room, she was enervated from what she saw and felt like she wanted to slump down.

The room was filled with flowers in vases.

"What is this?"

"Presents from the master," replied Tomkins, the butler, from behind her.

With speedy and crisp movements, unimaginable from his stocky figure, he laid yet another flower vase by the window.

"The master had duties and is absent today, but he wished that Miss Carlton would please spend your day leisurely." Lydia was relieved to hear that Edgar was out of the house.

"Then, that means I won't have to go off anywhere today." Since, she was practically dragged around everyday, to accompany Edgar to plays, and tea parties and recitals. She wanted to ask how any of this was the job of a fairy doctor, but two weeks had already passed since she was talked her way into going to all of those.

Lydia still hadn't done any decent, honest work.

But did Edgar really hire Lydia to have her work under him in mind?

Lydia thought she was practically his doll.

Even this room, didn't look like a work office at all.

The carpet and wallpaper had a yellowish, light green tone to set off the beautiful sofa and cloths decorated with fine lace and embroideries and the graceful silk curtains made with plenty of pleats.

Even the cabinets had glass ornaments and ceramic dolls lined up in them, making this room look liked it was home to an adolescent girl. She couldn't imagine what he was thinking.

And, several of the ordered dresses have arrived, so please verify their sizes.

What? Dresses? She stopped Tomkins who was making his way out.

"Yes, they are for when you will be going to the Royal Opera House next month."

"Opera? I wasn't told anything about that."

"Then, you shall be informed soon. We have prepared several dresses for in the future when you go to the social settings where you will need them. Oh, please do not feel offended. This is just one of the equipments for your employment supplied by the earl family."

"Um, but, what do you mean by social settings? How is that related to my

work? Besides, it's not right for you to include going to the opera in my schedule without consulting me."

Either way, girls were ornaments to him to stand beside him and help magnify his charm. And because she felt that, Lydia had resistance against this flower presents and taken out to glamorous social gatherings.

"In the case you said that, Lord Edgar stated he would put me in a dress and drag me along to the opera house. Please have mercy on this old soul."

One couldn't tell it off as a joke when Edgar said it. Lydia wanted to put her head in her hands.

"Mr. Tomkins, aren't you tired of serving Edgar?"

His family had been in service as the Earl's butler for generations and he was eager to serve his new master who had returned from a three-hundred year absence, but she was curious to know if he was happy with that frivolous young chap.

"Miss Carlton, it is the duty of the master to swing around his butler. By how well the butler can dispose his master's orders, proves his qualifications as a great butler."

"Oh..I see, so it's a world of competition."

He turned up the corners of his mouth, which made her guess this was a challenge worth doing for him.

"But I have no intention of playing competing with Edgar."

Lydia tugged her shall over her shoulders once more, and left her office.

"Where to? My lady."

"I'm free to do as I please, aren't I? Then, I'm going to take a little walk."

The thought that if she were to sit still here, made her think she was doing just what Edgar wanted her to do and that was irritating.

"It looks like the fog will be getting thicker in the afternoon," mentioned the butler.

"You can tell?"

"Yes, the humidity in the air tingles the fin on my back."

"Then, I'll be back before that."

Even though Easter had passed, the spring winds were taking their time and

hadn't arrived in London, and so, there were no signs of spring approaching and a number of foggy days continued.

She wondered how long she had to stay here in London. Lydia had originally only came out from the Scotland countryside to spend Easter with her father.

Lydia's father lived and worked as a London university professor, and had actually been worried about leaving his daughter to live alone at their Scotland residence; and so he mentioned that it would be better for her to live here.

But for Lydia, that countryside home of theirs was her haven, where her memories rested about her mother who passed away when she was little, and above else, she loved how it housed many different trees and plants and fairies. Even when after her grandmother died, and Lydia was left alone, her father didn't force her to move to London.

Even if she were to choose her country living now, her father was sure to agree. But, the real problem was Edgar.

Since she was hired by the Earl, she wouldn't be able to leave London without Edgar's permission.

However, in Lydia's case, it was more like she was more forced to go under his employment, and so she didn't have to be worried about being fired, so she was able to stay confident in that area.

To have a job that dealt with fairies was a rare one, but she couldn't make herself think that going along with Edgar's playful antics was part of her job, and so she thought it might be possible to retire back into the countryside still as his private fairy doctor.

She tried to think of a good way to convince Edgar to that idea, and as she thought that, Lydia wandered her way to the park.

"Oh, goodness, this fish is really awful."

The one who said that was the cat who was by her side without her knowledge. No, he wasn't really a cat but a fairy, and he was walking on all fours like a normal feline on top of the brick wall.

"Nico, you better stop secretly taking your meals from the stores."

"Now I understand why the alley cats aren't even going near the place. The food was not meant for me."

Nico paused to make sure there was no one around and he jumped down from the wall and stood up on his two hind legs. He straightened up his fluffy gray fur coat and adjusted the necktie on his neck and puffed out his chest like a proud gentleman.

"Then what is that?"

Lydia spotted his tail wrapped around something like he was carefully carrying it.

"They said it is a tin can. According to the hobgoblins who were sleeping under the eaves, this has the most delicious thing to eat in all of London."

"But that's a can of fish."

"What, fish? I never saw a fish like this."

"No, I mean, the fish in is in the can. It even says on the label that it's an herb marinated fish."

"Huh? So this is a container? There's no way it can be; there's no hole to put it through."

"Well, yes. Because the lid is sealed tight; you'll need a tool to open it."

Nico was examining the can by turning it round and round and knocked on it to test its hardness and as he began to realize what it was the hair on the back of his neck rose up in outrage.

"That bloody hobgoblin! How dare he trick me! Just because he couldn't open it up himself to eat it, he practically stole my walnut bread! On top of that, inside it is fish?" Lydia snatched the can away from him as he was about to throw it.

"Now, don't get too bothered by this. Let's have it opened up later. Even if it's fish, I'm sure it's something that couldn't be normally caught around here."

From there, along with Nico, she entered the greenery - filled park through one of the small dirt paths.

The sky was filled with clouds and the fog was starting to set in around them, but entering an area surrounded by trees was just relaxing in itself.

Because of this weather there was no one around, and she was able to spot faeries among the squirrels and small birds who bopped their heads out of the tree branches.

It wasn't much compared to the woods of Scotland, but places like this in London still had many fairies. Once they figured out Lydia could see them, a human who could see them must have been rare, as they began to gather into a swarm around her.

Sitting down onto a bench, Lydia listened to the playful conversations of the fairies. Listening to them wasn't like trying to pick up the meaning of their words, most people wouldn't know that it was more like enjoying listening to the chirping and twitter of small birds.

As she calmly let the time roll by, the view around suddenly grew dark. She thought a big cloud of fog had rolled up around her, but she heard the deep, rumble of dog's barking.

The fairies immediately flew away in all directions. It seemed the dog's barking was getting closer.

"Oh, no, Nico. I wonder if there's stray dogs on the loose."

"What, you have to be joking. I'm out of here."

"Oh, wait, Nico!"

As soon as he vanished, a bush right beside her moved unnaturally.

A large dog stepped out growling. One by one, more came out from the dark and circled around her.

"No.. go away!"

One of the canines jumped up to attack her, and she didn't hesitate to throw the can that was in her hand. It hit its mark, and the dog tumbled to the ground, but it looked like that only sparked and stirred up the other dogs.

Just when she was about to break off a branch, a figure appeared from behind the tree trunk.

It was a large man clothed in all black and he appeared like he came rising up out of the fog.

"Fogman...." Its name slipped through her lips as a whisper because the sight of him resembled the ominous faerie that was said to appear out of the fog along with a pack of fae dogs.

The man reached out his hand towards Lydia.

She felt the tinge of dizziness from the smell of strong chemical drugs.

What? A kidnapper?

However, just then, the man's body went stiff. And still in that same position, his body craned forward and fell to the ground.

A pool of blood oozed out from under his body and soaked the ground red and the one who stood behind him as he looked down with absolutely no expression on his face was a young man with hazel skin.

Lydia knew who he was. He was a fighter from overseas who was like a walking killing weapon and Edgar's loyal servant.

"Ahhhh!"

Next thing Lydia knew, the fangs of the wild dog in front of her.

The young man rocketed at her with the knife in his hand aimed at the dog. In one slash, he gashed opened the animal's neck.

Within a blink of an eye, he stood guarding in front of Lydia and knocked down the dogs one-by-one as they charged at him.

"We must leave, Miss Carlton."

"But, uh, Raven, why are you,"

"Hurry, we need to leave this area."

Urged on, she followed after him.

When they finally reached an area where there were some people, Lydia suddenly felt sick.

Although she was out of that unnerving situation, she felt like the smell of chemicals and blood were swirling around her.

She checked her clothes and hair and they weren't dirty or stained at all, yet, she felt as if she was soaked with invisible blood that was splashed back onto her.

It was no mistake that her life was saved by Raven, but she was more frightened than thankful because she witnessed his merciless way of killing.

"Couldn't you go easy on them just a little," was what she wanted to say, but Lydia knew that that sort of standard evaluation of his was much too different than hers.

"My lady, are you hurt anywhere?"

"No,I'm fine."

She just didn't want to be touched, and so Lydia somehow managed to straighten her spine. The city was sure a dangerous place.

She never imagined that she would be attacked during the day in a deserted area.

She even needed to watch out for pickpockets and purse-snatchers in crowded areas, and even if there was no one around, thieves or perverts would be looking for a chance to go after her.

It wasn't hard to imagine that someone would eye a person like Lydia who didn't know her way around London and was walking around alone.

But still, to have Raven follow after her didn't put her at ease at all.

Because Edgar's loyal servant also happened to be a ferocious killing animal. There were still parts about him that Lydia hadn't fully grasped.

But the part about not knowing someone good enough was the same for Edgar who was his master.

"Lydia! Thank goodness, you were safe."

Edgar came running into her flower-filled work office, and overly reacted like he was relieved and quickly took both of Lydia's hands.

Lydia only looked at him with a frown, and he looked back at her with a sweet smile like an innocent child, but she knew there wasn't a once of innocence inside him.

Lydia speedily shook off his grip.

"Yes, I was safe. Thanks to you having Raven trail after me." She tried to have every word that came out of her mouth filled with sarcasm, but Edgar wasn't hurt at all.

"I'm glad I could be of help."

"That's not what I meant, what is the meaning of this! If that pervert didn't appear, then that meant you were going to have Raven report every single little thing I did without me knowing it, weren't you?"

"I didn't anticipate that. This was purely for the purpose to guard you."

Oh, really?

Lydia stared up at him like a hawk as he looked back at her worryingly, but those soul-melting ash mauve eyes and stunningly handsome looks hid what he

was really planning skillfully in the dark.

Edgar was still 'a mystery man' to Lydia.

From the corner of her eye, she saw Raven entering the room through the doorway.

"This is medication for Miss Carlton. Since she reported of a headache."

"Is that true, Lydia? It must be because you went through such a terrifying experience." As he said that, he leaned in as if to peer in closer to her eyes, which made Lydia scoot herself the other direction on the sofa.

He was a man who didn't hold back on creating an intimately short distance, and he wa aware that no one wouldn't desire a man with his looks and sweet words and seductive gestures, which was all the more troublesome.

For Lydia, who was called an oddball and excluded from the group and hence not used to being in close contact with the opposite gender, all of that appeared improper and displeased her, but he carried on in spite and laid his hand on her forehead.

"It doesn't seem like you have a fever."

"It's because I saw blood, but I'm fine now!"

Edgar turned his eyes towards Raven. Thanks to that, he leaned back and finally let there be some room between the two of them.

"Blood? Did you kill?"

"Yes."

It was normal for Raven not to move a muscle on his face. He was forever loyal to Edgar and didn't give any excuse and answered his master's question in a calm, composed manner.

"How many?"

"One man plus four."

"Four?"

"He had dogs with him."

Edgar's eyes dropped down as if in deep thought but then he opened his mouth to speak to Raven.



"All right. That's enough."

With a nod, Raven set down a glass of water and medicine on the table, as well as a tinned iron object.

"I also picked up this up which was dropped by Miss Carlton."

It was the tin can that Lydia threw at the dogs.

Edgar picked up the object and looked at it curiously, it had a corner of it bent-in.

"A can of fish?"

"No, it's a weapon. Most likely."

Raven wasn't the sort of person to make a joke, so that must mean he thought Lydia always carried around a tin can to be ready to throw it at something.

She felt a little embarrassed for some reason, and glared at Nico who was curled up in a circle on the cushion pretending to be a cat.

As if saying it had nothing to do with me, Nico opened his mouth in a yawn.

"Hmmm, and how would you use it?" teased Edgar, after he saw Raven leave.

"Would you like to find out?" Lydia replied.

"No, I think I'll pass."

Replies with a crack of a smile, he stood up to sit down on the sofa opposite of her.

"By the way, Lydia, I would like to ask you not to walk outdoors by yourself from now on. If being with Raven makes you uncomfortable, then you could have the head maid accompany you, plus you can use our carriage to go from your house to here like always."

"You don't have to over-do everything like that, I'll just be more careful from now on."

"I'm not over-doing this. All the daughters from respectable homes do the same."

"But I'm not a peer. I'm used to traveling by myself and I prefer to."

"This isn't Scotland, but the capital of Her Royal Highness. People judge you by the way you dress and act. Your father is a member of the Royal Academy and a known professor among the upper class. You are his daughter, so you should be aware of the social etiquette of a proper lady."

"Father doesn't mind any of that."

"But would he oppose for you to become a proper lady? It isn't that strict or formal. As long as you don't miss the basics, saying something odd or acting a little strange wouldn't become an issue. Even if you see fairies, or hear them, and talk yourself tired about their existence, people will just think that is a characteristic of your personality."

I'm not sure if that's true.

In the countryside town, Lydia was treated as a lunatic because she went around claiming that she could see faeries. On the other hand, Edgar announced his title of Earl of the fairyworld, and yet he was accepted without any troubles.

That didn't mean that the upper class believed in the existence of faeries, but they only accepted the seasonal sense of humor of the family that had inherited that name from generation to generation; but the reason society accepted him so readily was probably because of how Edgar was able to act like the ideal, perfect nobleman that no one could find fault in.

"So that's why a former gang member like you is able to walk around with that proud upper class face."

"Yes, that's why."

However, Lydia didn't wish to act like a peer. Even if that benefited her, she was stuck about the point where she would be doing what Edgar wanted.

"The reason you want to dress me up like a lady is because it would take away your boredom, wouldn't it? You must be out of your mind to supply this office and send these flowers."

"You didn't like it? I chose everything with your image in mind."

"Huh? How would I?"

"Like this rose, it's a rare species that blooms an ice-green flower. If you look at it under the lamp light, you can see it shines in golden green, just like your eyes."

He pressed his lips lightly against the rose that was near him. He looked at her with his heated, luring eyes, and they made Lydia be under the impression like she was the one getting a kiss on her eyelid.

Edgar stood up and continued his conversation as he walked over to Lydia.

"And you are the fairy in the flower garden. By having you sit here, this room is completed like one marvelous painting. Just like I thought; it's a beautiful sight. Ahh, yes, would you allow a small violet to bloom beside you. To stand in my place so that I can always be watching you; I think it will highlight that beautiful caramel hair of yours."

"Ohh, all right! Fine! So, just stop."

She regretted that she asked, and he held out a violet in front of her-it had the same color as his eyes-and although tired, she accepted it.

She nearly forgot that if this lady's-man was allowed to keep his mouth open, then he would endlessly keep on coming up with ways to complement and flatter the person, no matter what kind of person they were.

Edgar shrugged, like he still had more he wanted to say.

He had the trait of openly speaking lines that was too embarrassing for her, but she knew what he said wasn't what he really meant. Even if she knew that, she felt like he would somehow sneak into her heart if she were to allow him the chance, and that terribly upsetting for Lydia.

"I treat you as a lady because I didn't hire you as one of my servants. It's because I feel you are an important, irreplaceable member of this earl family."

He spoke in an unusually serious tone and placed his hand on the back of the sofa Lydia was sitting on.

"This title was something you gave me, and so this isn't just mine alone, but I feel it was thanks to you. You, as a Fairy Doctor, are my important partner."

"I prefer to work behind the stage. I don't want to dress-up and become your accessory."

"A jewel's value is only when it captures and mesmerizes the eyes of many people. It's a waste to leave a young and beautiful fairy doctor behind the curtain."

It was true that she was a young chit, but it was a personal opinion and completely subjective if she was pretty or not. She wasn't ever complimented on her looks other than her family, and she didn't consider herself attractive. She was told time-and-time-again that her looks were too stern and her personality was too harsh.

Although Edgar was an exception, he was sure to be saying the same sort of flattering lines to anybody.

As she thought that, she started to become a little irritated.

"And, why is that? Isn't it to make you stand out more."

"No, that's not it. I mean to say..., that I always want you by my side."

He said it in a timid tone like he was unconfident; and that made it seem like he was confessing his unbearable feelings for her.

Lydia desperately tried to calm the racing beat of her heart.

Edgar was a man not to be trusted. He wasn't twisted from the core, but he could do any heartless act if it was necessary.

If Lydia's help was needed for the Ashenbert family, then he would think up of any way that would keep her here.

"Do you want to keep an eye on me that much? Is it because I'm the only other person besides Raven that knows you were the criminal that was supposed to be executed in America? I don't have any plans of revealing that, so you can relax. For all the faeries that accepted you as their new earl, I'll do anything I can to help as a fairy doctor. So it isn't necessary to flannel me or pretend to flirt with me."

Edgar lowered his eyes to the floor, the sight of him looked like he was heartbroken.

Why are you making that face? Because you felt stinged by what I said?

There's no way he was hurt, but, still, Lydia felt a tinge of guilt. If it wasn't a lie when he said he thought of Lydia as his partner, then she would be the one who hurt him by denying and questioning his feelings.

"I see, I never imagined you hated me that much."

"Uh, I didn't mean," said Lydia, as she stood up and called out to him like she wanted to stop him.

"Then, does that mean I'm not hated?" Edgar whipped away in a blink of an eye and he suddenly had her hands in his.

"It's not like I particularly hate..."

"So it's more towards like?"

"Eh."

The smile that made any girl fall under a romantic illusion came right up to hers.

"I-I'm not either! I am the Fairy Doctor of this house, nothing more and nothing less, so you should stop talking about something so improper. Let go of my hands," she dauntlessly told him, with her eyes firmly looking up at his.

Edgar made a sour smile but he still let go of her hands, so that must have meant he sensed her feelings about there being no romance or desire.

"All right, all right. Then let's talk about something that might make you happy. Do you know about fogmen?"

She already had her back to him, but hearing that, she whipped around.

"What about a fogman?"

"Hmmm, when faeries come up in the conversation, your golden green eyes give off a keen sparkle. I wager my strong rival are faeries, no doubt."

Lydia was no longer listening to what Edgar was saying. Because she was remembering the time when she was nearly attacked at the park.

Of course, it wasn't a fairy but a human man that came after her, but she couldn't help feel fate of hearing the word fogman again.

"There is a female visitor here who wishes you hear your opinion. I know you

just been through a frightening experience, but if you're not tired, would you mind paying her a visit?"

As he watched Lydia leave the room, Nico raised his body up from the cushion and sat himself upright on the chair and crossed his legs.

"Oh, no, she's played just like the Earl wanted her."

He took a silver spoon into this paw and using its reflection, he fixed his necktie. The more high class a fairy was, they could make their reflections appear and disappear at will.

He was unsatisfied about the part where he was frequently mistaken for a cat, but for the moment, he liked his lush, oxidized silver fur-coat, his eyes that shined like jewels, and his manly whiskers.

"I wonder what's going to happen. It's obvious that he's a scoundrel and as long as he doesn't do anything to Lydia, then there's no use for me to stand up," uttered Nico but as he said that, he wasn't really against Lydia going in-and-out of the castle-like estate of Edgar who was beginning to consolidate his position as earl.

That was because the tea here was just so delicious.

The food and spirits were also quite excellent. The air was filthy in London and it was so noisy, and he was really getting tired of this city, but he was beginning to rethink about staying here at little bit longer.

"Gheesh, listening to his overly sweet talk made my tea go cold."

"Shall I pour a fresh cup?"

The one who came into the room was the butler.

"Yes, make it especially hot," asked Nico, handing out his teacup.

This butler had merrow blood in him, and so he had quickly realized Nico's true self. And so, Nico stopped pretending.

Edgar might have sensed something, but Nico didn't have the intention of lowering his guard around him, so he continued to pretend like a cat.

That man still had things he was hiding, so there was no reason or obligation for Lydia and him to reveal their secrets.

Giving the sense that something was off and making him believe he would never be able to understand their true nature was just right.

"Oi, Mr butler, what is that earl thinking up of next?"

"Oh, as in?" said the butler in a half-hearted reply, as he poured hot Darjeeling into the cup.

"A while ago, I spotted him taking off down to the downtown area by himself. He was dressed in a completely different fashion than his usual perfect self, like one from the lower class and mingled in with the common folk in dirty clothes."

"Wouldn't you have been mistaking that for someone else?"

"There was no mistake. Even if he could hide that bright blond head of his under a commoner hat, he could never be able to hide that presence of his. He stands out in a crowd no matter what. You would know that. I can't say how he's different, but he has an air about him that makes him different than the rest of the crowd."

"Maybe so."

"Then, who was the girl that he invited into his carriage three days ago?"

"Did someone get on?"

"Lady Walpole, was what she was called, but what is she to him, I don't know. Is he going after her?"

"I haven't the faintest idea."

"Humph, are you trying to prove that a good butler doesn't spill his master's secrets? Well, bravo, you pass."

Tomkins only replied by curving his full lips into the shape of a smile.

A fish.

That was what this man's features resembled, because he had merrow blood, and that made Nico lick his lips.

Nico then remembered and turned his eyes over to the tin can on the table.

"Oh, could you open that up? That can."

"Will you be eating it directly from here?"

"I'm just going to give it a taste."

From his pocket, the butler took out a chisel. Nico was amazed at how he had been carrying that around with him.

He stared at the can, swallowing the wad of saliva in his mouth as he wondered if it was really the most delicious thing in London.

Just then, he saw the tin can shake a faint shiver.

As if it was trying to resist Nico trying to eat it, it emitted hostility through its steel cover.

"Hold on right there!" Nico stopped the butler who was about to put a hole into it by his chisel.

And then he took the can and tapped it, shook it, and clamped his fangs onto it. When he set it down onto the table once more, it gave a slight tug into the opposite direction as if to escape.

Could there be some strange creature lurking inside it?

However, because of its hermetical seal structure, one had to open it in order to know what was inside, but it would be too dangerous to try to open it when you didn't know what it held.

"For now, I'll hold back on taste-testing it," said Nico crossing his arms, as he looked down at the can.



Escorted by Edgar, Lydia entered the salon facing the south of the house to see that the visitor was a woman, who stood up to greet her with a nervous expression.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, Ms Marl. This young lady is my Fairy Doctor, Lydia Carlton."

Hearing his introduction, the woman let the anxiety roll off her shoulders.

"Oh, my, so she is, I had imagined that I would be meeting an old woman like some sort of witch. I'm a little hesitant to relay my story to such a young lady, it might frighten her."

A fairy doctor isn't a witch. She raised her eyebrow as she thought that, but it was a common mistake, however on second thought, she decided that it wasn't something to make a fuss about.

"There is nothing to worry about. If it's about faeries, then she is perfectly aware of their ferociousness."

Edgar invited Ms. Marl to take a seat.

"And so, weren't we talking about how the late Baron's daughter Miss Doris Worpole had been taken away by a fogman?"

Ms Marl sat herself down, and at Edgar's question, she drooped her head.
"Yes, that is correct. My lady hasn't returned home for three days. She had left the house to help out at the charity bazaar and according to the maid who accompanied her, they had gotten separated somewhere at the site, and they do not know of her whereabouts since."

A baron's daughter went missing. And, the story seems to be that she was kidnapped by a fogman. Lydia tightened her expression at the seriousness of the situation.

According to Ms Marl, the sixteen-year-old Doris' parents had passed away and she currently lived with her ward uncle and her female cousin who was one year older than her.

Ms Marl had been the tutor in the past for the Worpole family, but she left her post due to her marriage, but had been keeping in touch with the baron daughter even after that. Since she was a distant relative of the baron family, she was searching for the whereabouts of the baron daughter and worried for her safety as her friend.

However, because this sort of incident would be seen as a disgrace and could possibly negatively affect the future prospects of marriage for an upper class young debutante, her search was secretly managed within the baron family, but when Ms Marl brought up the possibility of the fogman, she was laughed at and it was never brought up again.

Well, Lydia was also frequently laughed at for bringing up the topic of faeries, so she knew how she felt.

That was when Ms Marl mulled over on what to do, and in the end, aware that she would be revealing the secret that Lady Doris may have been unintentionally involved in some sort of dangerous incident, and came to pay a visit to ask for help from Edgar.

Apparently she felt he was sincere, trustworthy and so she could rely on him. But, Lydia's thoughts on that were, she has sure been tricked into thinking that. Even though she was married, Mrs Marl was still a young woman, and quite attractive, so Lydia could understand how Edgar would want to put up a good face in her presence.

"Yes, I remember the fog that day was so thick you couldn't see two steps in front of you," said Edgar.

But just because of that, normally no one would jump to the claim that it was a kidnap by a fogman.

"Then, why do you think it's a fogman? Even if she did disappear on a foggy night. These days, there aren't that many people who take the fogman seriously," said Lydia.

"Yes, honestly, I still don't really believe in it. I'm so sorry, even though I'm here to ask for your help about it. But, we have no clues, like she had disappeared into the fog. And, my lady seemed to seriously believe in the existence of the fairies like the fogman. She was absorbed in the 'fairy egg' game. I heard that it's like a fortune-telling game and if you break your promise to the faerie, it's said that the fogman would come to punish you, and so I remembered she was quite frightened about that, and I was bothered at how panicked she seemed."

"Fairy egg?"

"You don't know, Lydia? It's very popular amongst the young ladies."

Why would you know a game that's favored amongst girls? Lydia really wanted to question that at him, but decided it was only silly.

"You lay a piece of paper that has all the alphabets written on it on a table and lay a glass ball and coin on top of it. With a few members, you put your finger on top of the coin and call out to the faerie that's supposedly in the glass ball. There's two ways of doing the game, one or two friends would make a promise and swear an oath to the 'fairy egg' and the other is where you ask questions and the faerie would answer them. For the question game, the faerie uses its invisible power to move the coin and point to an alphabet, so you can find out if the person you're interested in shares the same feelings as you, or you can find out if there is someone who likes you."

"So you've tried it."

"I have. It's quite fun. All the girls were thrilled and were screaming with joy. When you move the coin on top of your own initials when they asked who their future lover would be, the girl would really grow conscious of you, it's so much easier than trying to win her over."

You good-for-nothing man.

Lydia glared at him with loathing eyes, and he only turned the corners of his mouth upward. But when he turned his face back to Mrs Marl, he quickly shifted his expression to the look of worry.

"So, Mrs. Marl, that fairy egg is just a simple game. Even if there wasn't a fairy, one of the participating members must have purposefully, or even unconsciously moved the coin. Only those young ladies must all believe it was the power of the fae, so if they broke their promises or let go of the coin in the middle of the questioning, they are overly worried and scared that they would anger the fairy."

"But, you can't be for certain that there wasn't a fairy. They love to play pranks. If there was something inside the glass ball that would interest them, then there could be the possibility that they got near it and something interfered with the fortune-telling."

The lady bent herself forward in a worried gesture.

"Which means, if you were to offend or upset the fairy, then there's the possibility you could be taken away somewhere by them?"

"Perhaps, we can't be certain to deny that possibility, but a fogman is surely not the kind of fairy to be interested in a coin game. Its body is like a mass of evil and malice clumped together with a demon spirit. It's not the type to trade or negotiate with humans."

Oh, my lord, uttered the lady, shivering.

"Edgar, is it true that the fogman would punish those who participated in the fairy egg game?"

"Who knows, when I participated, there was no mention of the fogman. We just called it 'Mr Fairy.' And I don't think that the punishment was that severe enough to make the young girls worry so much about it."

"That would make sense. Or else, it wouldn't be a game. Then the only thing that bothers me is the fairy egg game and the fogman and how they are connected with Lady Doris mentioning about them."

"But, Lydia, couldn't there still be the possibility that she was taken away by a different fairy who likes to play pranks."

"That's...hard to say at this point."

"Then what should we do? Is this in your area of work?"

It was also important to decipher if this was the act of a fairy or human. Lydia didn't hesitate and faced the lady.

"Of course, I will search for her. If I can be of any use."

"Uhh..." uttered Mrs Marl with a dubious look.

"Couldn't you be able to summon out a fairy now and ask them the location of my lady, or look into a crystal ball?"

It looks like she had mistaken the role of a fairy doctor with a psychic or fortune-teller.

"Umm, I cannot solve mysteries using any magic. It's just that I'm a little educated about fairies is all, and all I can do is look for any clues that any faeries have left."

At her answer, Mrs Marl didn't hide her disappointment.

Her reaction also depressed Lydia.

The lady had come here hoping for an answer. Even if her only help was someone who could use magic, she must have been looking forward for someone to clearly indicate where the baron daughter was and if that place was here on earth or in a different realm.

A fairy doctor's dull performance wasn't something lavish like using magical powers in front of the clients so they weren't usually well understood and depended on.

That's why most of the time, they were seen as oddballs to the rest of society.

"Would that be meaningless for you? Mrs Marl. Like how you ask around to different people, Lydia here would ask around to different faeries. If something happened to Lady Doris in a deserted, empty area, then maybe a fairy could have been there and seen it."

Edgar softly spoke to the lady. Apparently that reassurance had worked and she had a satisfied, happy look.

"Yes, you're right. Please Miss Carlton, please find my dear friend."

Lydia showed her gratitude and nodded.

Edgar turned to hide one side of his face from the lady and gave her a wink.

Lydia understood that he just gave his timely hand of help for her, but she couldn't help think he was kidding around when they were in a serious situation. But, amazingly, Edgar was well aware of what a fairy doctor was. That could have been because he himself had hoped for knowledge about fairies than magical powers from Lydia in the past, but from the start, he didn't regard her with excessive curiosity or overly be fearful of her.

The reason she couldn't brush him away even though she knew he was a dishonorable man, probably came from that part of him. .

Since there hadn't been anyone in the past who had decently understood and accept Lydia's ability, so that made her look over Edgar's flaws.

Maybe that was the reason why she would be thrown around.

"My lord, thank you very much. You were the only one who honestly listened to such a laughable story about fairies."

Mrs. Marl looked over to Edgar with a some what calmer expression.

"On top of that, you were kind enough to encourage me that your fairy doctor would be able to solve this problem. Since there's nothing I can do when it comes to fairies."

What? Edgar was the one who came up with that offer?

Lydia was certainly surprised about that.

However you think about it, there was no way this man thought this was the work of a fairy. He claimed that the fairy egg's fortune-telling was a simple game that had no tricks behind it. And yet, it was irresponsible of him to claim to her that a fairy doctor would be able to do something.

She had the small feeling that he was purposefully trying to drag Lydia into this case.

"Not at all. I had met Lady Doris before, so naturally I got a little worried."

He gave the lady a crack of a smile, as Lydia coldly stared from the side with dubious eyes.

Now that she thought about it, would this man really offer his help in an innocent attempt to help another?

Or, did he just want to act like a kind gentleman in front of a lady?

She didn't know the answer, but she felt like she was conviniently being used by

him.

Perhaps, he might be planning on doing something against the law again.

At that moment, the thought that drifted across Lydia's mind was maybe he was the culprit, which was a doubtful suspicion, that wasn't based on anything, against this former criminal who didn't think or feel anything against breaking the law.

Chapter 2 - The Bogey beast's fairy egg

That man is too suspicious.

However you look at it, he's too suspicious.

Lydia was standing in the kitchen of her house and couldn't contain the bubbling irritation building up in herself as she was waiting for her baking biscuits to be done.

She had the feeling that her suspicion about Edgar might actually be true after she heard Nico's story.

According to Nico, Edgar had met the baron daughter, Lady Doris Worpole on the day she disappeared. Even if he had only invited her onto his carriage, Mrs. Marl wouldn't have known that and most likely Edgar didn't let her know.

"Oh, no, did he kidnap her?"

He could have put dangerous stories about the fogman into her head, scaring her, and made it seem like a fairy was involved and took her away.

Even if he was a former criminal...., but as she thought that, she was still confused.

"But, then, for what purpose?"

"Of course to sell her off, since young, pretty girls would make good money."

Nico magically appeared on top of the kitchen counter. He had one of the secret scotch bottles that was hidden by her father.

"Money, huh, well, I don't think it would be that."

He was sure to have plenty of it and as an current Earl residing in England, it would be too much of a risk for him to dirty his precious hands in crimes again to go after money.

At the present time, there should be no reason for him to cross such a dangerous bridge.

But there were many peculiar points.

"But, well, he would frequently disguise himself to go to the harbor and the downtown areas. That smells like when a criminal is planning to do something.

It also seems like he's been going in-and-out of the expensive casinos and it seemed too suspicious for him to be just a simple gamble-lover. I'm sure he's trying to focus people's attention away from himself by having you search for the where-abouts of that baron daughter."

Lydia swiped the scotch bin away from Nico's paw as he was about to open it.
"Now, don't go stealing away Father's delights."

Nico tuted in frustration and threw a piece of paper in Lydia's direction.
"Then, look at this. I found it in his room."

She picked it up and saw that it was a cut-out from the tabloid.

"[The children who disappeared into the London fog.... Could this be the work of a white-slave trade organization or some sort of secret underground operation?]"

The story was written about a boy who was rescued by a Briton in Brazil who claimed to have been kidnapped from London and sold off to a farm. On the ship he was put on, there apparently were many other boys and girls who had been through the same experience.

"[From the corners of London, there are endless number of disappearing children. It has come to the point where people are starting to believe the rumors that they were kidnapped by the imaginary "fogman" and in most of the cases, the location of the missing children are never found.]"

It ended there.

"He had a collection of other clippings from similar articles. There's no mistake that he's planning on doing something bad. How you were nearly kidnapped could be somehow related to this ."

".....Are you trying to say that Edgar was behind that? The attacker was killed by Raven."

"Hmm, well, I'm not sure, but I still think it's dangerous to be around that man. Lydia, why don't we hurry up and return to Scotland? Well, it may not be so easy to end your employment from that earl."

Edgar said that he had been sold as a white slave in the past. There could be a possibility that he was collecting these because it was related to his tramatric past.

Would someone, who went through the horrible experience of being sold and robed of their free will as a human being, do something like sell another human being?

The ignorant and optimistic part of Lydia made her didn't want to believe that.
“Miss, your biscuits are going to get burnt.”

The maid's notice made Lydia rush to look into the iron stove. She pulled out the iron plate to see her biscuits had managed to escape from being scorched.
“Thank goodness. It's been a long time since I baked anything, I hope they taste like Mother's.”

Today was Sunday. And an unusual day when her father was home. The two of them went to church early in the morning and Lydia decided to bake some sweets from her mother's recipe for their afternoon tea. If there wasn't the thing to worry about Edgar, it should have been a perfect day off from work to get some relaxation.

Their town house wasn't something that could compare to Edgar's palace, but this house that Lydia's father lives in, employs a maid and a cook. There wasn't any need for Lydia to stand in the kitchen, but just like her mother did, she thought it was her duty to bake the biscuits.

Because her fairy doctor mother baked biscuits with herbs as offerings to the fairies.

Lydia threw one into the fire of the stove and one on the window sill. Nico was already helping himself to one.

She left the maid to prepare the tea and headed to the drawing room with the plate of biscuits in her hand.

She heard a male voice talking with her father; it seems like Mr. Langley, her father's student had come to visit.

“Oh, Miss Carlton, I'm sorry to intrude so early in the day.”

“Hello, Mr. Langley. You have perfect timing. I just baked some biscuits, please have some while you're here.”

“Thank you very much. Professor Carlton, this house has surely become much brighter ever since Miss Lydia has come to live here.”

“Was this house that dark?”

The drawing room of this house was filled with rocks, skeleton specimens and rare animal stuffings, so normal visitors would flee within five minutes.

"It's not dark, more like unapproachable for ladies with ordinary sense. Why don't you at least put away the sculls? Even for the sake of Miss Carlton."

Carlton made the look like he was shocked and looked around the room as he pushed up his round spectacles.

"This is quite a relaxing space for me, but, Lydia, does this room actually disturb you?"

"No, father, not at all."

"Hah, now she really is the daughter of a natural historian. If all ladies were as understanding as you, then there would still be a ray of hope for scholars who are resigning their fates as bachelors."

Langley himself was a twenty-seven-year-old bachelor.

"Oh, so you're here to court Lydia, are you?"

"Professor, are you worried? If you're nerved by someone like me, then it'd be quite a commotion when Miss Lydia will bring her suitor."

"Lydia is still a child."

Since she came to live here, Carlton had been treating Lydia like a child, probably because he suddenly realized that his only daughter, who had been living a far distance away from him, had reached a marriageable age.

It seems the attitude of that naturally-born ladies-man earl towards Lydia had given quite a wake-up call to Carlton.

Just at that time, the maid brought in the tea and Nico was the quickest one to bring his cup to his lips. Nico sat next to Lydia and held the cup and saucer with his paws but that sight didn't appear in Langley's vision. He might be aware that there was a cat in the room, but the reason he wasn't acting surprised was because his brain probably didn't registering anything more than that.

But according to Nico, it had taken two years after her parent's marriage for her father to even realize that her mother's cat was a magical speaking feline, so she could understand that Langley was also that sort of person.

Lydia thought that since her father and Langley were in the same academic field, they shared similar characteristics.

Like how they both seemed a little bit unreliable. Or like how even if they were incredible scholars, they were incompetent in everything else.

Putting a biscuit into her mouth, Lydia was satisfied as it didn't taste that bad and as she sat watching her happily smiling father, she basked in the peaceful afternoon of her day-off.

The best part about it being Sunday is I don't have to see that criminal's gentleman face, she thought reflectingly in her mind.

But her peaceful day quickly vanished at the announcement of the maid.

"Sir, the Earl Ashenbert is here to see you. He says he has business with your daughter."

"What, oh, no, send him away!" gasped Lydia in reflex.

"Lydia, we can't turn the earl away at the door. Show him in."

It was natural for her father to say that, but Lydia felt the strength drain out of her and slumped down weakly into the chair.

Carlton should have vaguely realized that Edgar wasn't a true earl. However, as he was acknowledged by the College of Arms, he seemed to have no issue in calling him as earl.

Because to Carlton, either way, people in the nobility were incomprehensible to him and beyond his grasp.

And so, he silently gave his authorization for Lydia to be hired by the earl as he knew she wanted to be acknowledged as a fully-fledged fairy doctor.

It was a forceful hire that didn't give her the choice to refuse, but there were no problems in the working conditions for Lydia and it was her decision, in the end, to accept the position after much thought.

And so by acknowledging that, Edgar was the employer of his daughter and a respectable earl to Carlton and so he must have thought that he needed to pay his respects.

After a few minutes, Edgar stepped into the Carlton house drawing room in his usual sleek and elegant grace.

He was dressed in an attire like he was going to an evening party, with a black evening coat and a nicely fitted, wine-colored gilet. But the most outstanding feature about him, was his shining blond hair and his sparkling smile that was

like an angel.

Although there was probably a devil hiding behind that face.

"Please excuse my intrusion, Profession Carlton."

"Welcome, my lord. I hope my daughter hasn't been causing you any troubles."

"Oh, no, she's doing wonderfully."

Lydia gave a gloomy side-glance over to Edgar, who handed his top hat to the maid and was giving a few innocuous greeting words as he shook hands with her father who stood up in a tired manner.

She waited to open her mouth after Carlton was finished introducing Langely to him.

"So, what is your business with me?"

"Lydia, don't be so impolite all of a sudden. My lord, please have a seat. Would you care for some tea? We only have the biscuits that Lydia had baked."



"How interesting. I would love to have a taste."

There's nothing interesting about it. He's talks about it like it's some unfamiliar food from a foreign country.

Lydia scrunched her brows slightly together.

Edgar smiled to her as she was glowering at him and chose to purposefully sit

down right next to her. Even to go as far as to grabbing Nico, who was sitting in that spot, by the fur on his neck and moving him.

Nico made a threatening posture by raising the hair on his back and didn't spare to throw invective words at him, but that must have only sounded like a cat was hissing and snarling at him.

"I see, it has a curious taste," remarked Edgar once he took a bite of a biscuit.

"You're fine to just say you don't like it."

"It's just like you, once I have a taste, I crave for more."

Carlton cleared his throat in an obvious cough.

"By the way, Professor, I happened to read your newest article the other day."

Edgar swiftly changed the topic by turning his attention and making a serious look at Carlton.

"Oh, so you have an interest in natural history."

"Nature is profound the more you delve into it. The word incredible was made for the study of natural history as it always astounds me. I particularly enjoyed reading the part about your analysis on crystal structure."

Once he'd open his mouth, it was easy for him to grab Carlton's attention. He acted like a humble young student asking for answers from his teacher, but also managed to give back smart replies and ask questions that were right on the mark to liven the conversation.

It seems like it wasn't only women that Edgar had an art in winning over. Most likely, he knew the most accurate way to present himself in order to win the favor of any type of person.

It may have been natural for someone like him who knew how to get on in the harsh, real world successfully, as he really did seem to have read the article, and he had hit the right buttons to gain the favor of her father, who even she thought was obsessed with his own field research.

Now, father, you really shouldn't open up to him like that, was what she wanted to say from watching the two of them.

"By the way, Professor, I happened to come across some old documents on this subject, it said that there is a stone called the "fairy's egg" or something like that."

Lydia was drawn into the men's conversation at the new subject brought up by Edgar.

Talking about fairy's egg, there was one involved in the case of the disappeared baron daughter. A case that Edgar was suspiciously involved in.

"Why, yes, there indeed exists a stone with that name."

"Father, is that fairy egg real?"

"It's only a mineral. It has that romantic name, but it's only just a rare agate stone."

"An agate, like that?"

There was an agate gemstone the size of a child's head on display in the cabinet along with various other colorful stones.

Carlton stood up and took that large gemstone out of the cabinet and placed it on the table.

The outer surface of the stone only appeared like a black, coarse rock. But, one wouldn't be able to imagine that it was hiding a multi-colored striped pattern stone on the inside.

"When you look at it like this, it looks like there is an agate trapped in a rocky egg. Only after you crack the shell are you able to see what's inside."

Edgar curiously stared at the agate on top of the table which had already been split open in two to reveal the sparkling crystal layers in the cross-section of the agate.

"But, the agate that's called the fairy egg isn't a stone like this, is it?"

"The name that was given to those certain type of agates are proper nouns. It isn't related to its species. According to literature, it is a beautiful milky-white stone that has a green pattern on it. That coloration is a rare one called 'peppermint leaf,' and the 'fairy egg' is an agate with water trapped inside it."

"An agate with water in it?"

Although it was Edgar who started this topic, Lydia was the one actively asking the questions, probably because Edgar must have already looked up what a 'water-sealed agate' was.

"When you look at an agate gemstone, you can see how there is a open cave in the center of the stone, right? There are rare cases when water is trapped

inside this. But if you cut it in two like this, you can't checked if there is water. Because it evaporates in the instant you crack it."

"Then how can you make sure that there is water in it?"

"When you shake it, you can hear the water in it. If you find a stone like that, you carve off the exterior slowly. When you get near the center of the stone, you can transparently see the center of it. There will be the ancient water swaying back and forth that had been hidden asleep within the deep earth for hundreds and thousands of years."

Imagining that, Lydia let out a sigh. She wondered how the light would look when the first ray of sunlight had reached its center and shined through the color of the agate that was probably like thin frosted glass.

"Most likely, the 'fairy egg' name came from the peppermint coloration that covers it like the veins of a leaf and the water was compared to a mysterious, imaginary creature."

"But, father, if it was a rare agate stone like that, then there could have been a chance that a fairy had sneaked into it."

Langley, who was the only one not familiar with this side of the family, made a puzzled look from Lydia's bizarre comment.

"Fairies love beautiful things, and doesn't that mean that the water trapped inside the agate was the divine holy water from the six days of Creation? That would be enough to lure any faerie and captivate them. And gems are stones that absorb light and trap them within them. They even have the power to withhold magic. If a fairy were to enter one, they wouldn't be able to escape."

"There indeed are records that they were used for that purpose. I'm not sure about other agate stones that have water in them, but if I were to only say about 'fairy eggs,' then there anecdote stories about sealing harmful evil spirits in them."

"Then, those stones that are called fairy eggs, are there some that still exist?" asked Edgar.

"There may be. I have read there was a record one existed in an abbey in Canterbury somewhere around the 16th century. There is no record of any after that."

After hearing all of this, Lydia became puzzled about something.

"But, Edgar, doesn't the fairy egg fortune-telling game, that's popular among the young ladies, use a glass ball instead of an agate?"

There was no way that people would use the precious 'fairy egg' gemstone for a fortune-telling game.

"Yes, well, all of this up till now was just for my interest."

Interest? There is no way you would have an interest in faeries.

"About that fairy egg, I found the place that is selling them. Wouldn't you like to go and see?"

"Eh? Right now?"

"I came here so I could invite you. I hear it's a Sunday-only event at the Cremorne Gardens."

Then Edgar turned to face Carlton.

"Professor Carlton, would you give me permission to take Miss Carlton? This is in regards to her work as my hired fairy doctor."

"If it is related to her work, then there is no reason for me to hold her back, but, it's already dusk. Do you anticipate that this will last till late?"

"I hear that the public moral behavior at those types of pleasure gardens has been getting out of order."

Langley looked over to Lydia worriedly.

"Once our business is done, I promise to escort her back home safely. And I will be by her side at all times, so there is nothing to worry."

Lydia thought that even if she lost her way into a den of pickpockets or bag-snatching pilferers, none of them would be as dangerous as him, and that thought depressed her.

But if she were to investigate the case about the fairy egg, then she would need to get her hands on an actual one and find out how they are being sold.

And there was another thing she wanted to clarify with Edgar.

"I'll go. Would you wait for just a little? I'll go get ready."

Langley opened his mouth to Lydia who was about to stand up.

"Umm, Miss Carlton, I had forgotten about this. If you don't mind, I wanted to present you with this."

He held out a bouquet of a few Margaret flowers tied together with a ribbon.
“Since I’m always visiting without any gifts. Oh, and yes, thank you for the biscuits today.”

“Oh, my, thank you very much.”

She was honestly delighted by his present, so Lydia smiled gladly.

After grabbing her hat and shawl, Lydia climbed onto Edgar’s carriage that been waiting.

He had apparently brought along Raven, as she spotted him standing straight and completely still, waiting beside the carriage as she run up to it.

The carriage pulled to a start on the road and Lydia felt the prickling eyes of Edgar gazing intently at her as he sat next to her. It was absolutely uncomfortable.

“....What is it? Why are looking at me like that?”

“Now that I think about it, I never knew you could smile like that.”

“Huh?”

“When you were presented with the flowers from Mr. Langley, you looked happy from the bottom of your heart. When I give you flowers, you never showed any signs of delight.”

“It’s not like that, it’s just, in your case, your presents aren’t really from the heart....”

Once that left her mouth, she became worried if what she said was unkind. Because her first meeting with Edgar was such a dubious situation, it made her constantly act stern towards him. But to judge that he didn’t put his heart into his actions could have been prejudice of her.

“Hmm. Well, ladies would prefer flowers picked from the side of the road from their beloved than an extravagant bouquet from a man they don’t care about.”

She knew from experience that when he showed himself weak and depressed like that it was one of his tricks, but in the end, Lydia felt like she was the one who was doing the wrong thing.

She knew she really had to learn from her past mistakes, but seeing Edgar, who was normally dazzlingly handsome, assured and confident, she would feel sometimes feel mistaken of her judgement of him.

"Mr. Langley just lives close-by, so he comes to pay us a visit."

"Close-by?"

"The boarding house two doors down."

"Raven, did you hear that?"

"Yes," replied the young man who was sitting opposite of Edgar.

"Wa-wait just a moment! What are you planning to do!"

She panicked because Raven confessed to her before that he wouldn't spare a thought in killing anyone who would stand in Edgar's way.

"Just a little jealous."

"No, you're not, and to give an order so easily like that...."

Edgar gazed at Lydia like he was alarmed and snickered at her playfully.

"I was just kidding, Raven."

"I understood."

"For now, anyway."

"Stop joking around," said Lydia as she slumped down in her seat.

"Quit saying your jealous, you're just playing around by tossing me around and enjoying watching me how I react. And besides, Mr. Langley is just paying his respects to the daughter of his teacher. He treats me like a normal girl because he doesn't know that much about me."

"You aren't aware about your charms at all ."

"I'm perfectly aware of how I am. I was called an oddball all my life."

"Your eyes can see a majestic world. Your hearing can tell that there are voices mixed in the ruffling of the winds. If there was someone who found that out, then anyone would become scared. You know why?, because they would be afraid that the girl they had feelings for, might be able to see what they were hiding about themselves, even their unsightly side."

He sure was quick to come up with something.

She didn't want to be swayed by him so she replied back:

"Then why don't you stop trying to deceive me? I know that on the day Lady Doris disappeared you had invited her to ride in your carriage."

"Hmmm, and who told you that?"

But he wasn't shaken at all, instead hushed his voice to a whisper as if he had

been talking sweet, melting words to her.

"On that day, you went to the harbor. After you stopped your carriage by the Docks, what did you do? And another thing, you invited Lady Doris onto your carriage after she got separated from her maid by the bazaar grounds, but after that, she was no where to be seen. However you look at it, you're the most suspicious suspect."

"Are you a clairvoyante?"

"You came home with a small fairy who lives at the harbor on your carriage roof. After I met it and listened to what happened, it told me it was taken to an unfamiliar high-class residential area and was wondering around lost in your house, not knowing how to get back."

It was Nico who was the one to told her about t, but she let that detail slip. He couldn't argue against that and shrugged his shoulders and shifted his sitting posture upright.

"Even if I were to hire tight-lipped servants, I wouldn't be able to fool around if I married you."

"I wouldn't marry a man who fools around."

There was a faint huff that leaked out from the opposite seat from them.

"Raven, you laughed, didn't you?"

"I would never."

She stared at him in disbelief as she could never imagine she would hear Raven laugh, because he never showed any signs of emotion. However, Raven was calmly refusing Edgar's accusations with a meek expression, so she couldn't imagine what sort of face he had when he laughed.

Perhaps, he laughed expressionless.

"Lydia, I did indeed give a ride to Lady Doris on my carriage, but I only drove her to the front of her house. I'm telling you the truth when I say I met her by coincidence, so I was surprised when I heard she disappeared. Was the fairy not watching when she got off?"

"Yes, unfortunately. Apparently, it had fallen asleep for a while."

"....What a useless fae. Anyways, I'm not lying. Please trust me."

How was she suppose to trust a man who was a big liar from the beginning.

"Then, what made you decide in helping someone?"

"You can't blame me for being curious. After I drop her off in front of her house and she disappears like that..... It's natural that I would be the suspect. So that's why I need to find out the truth."

His lies sounded more convincing than the truth. He was someone who was able to make his lie that he was an earl come true, so to Lydia, she wasn't able to decipher if his words were really the truth or not."

"Is there anything else that you are hiding from me?"

"No."

"Are you trying to trick me again?"

"Now, why would I do that?"

He was someone who could deceive you as he lied with his serious demeanor and eyes, and yet she wondered why there was a stronger feeling in her that wanted to believe him than doubt him.

Not long after, the carriage reached the Cremorne Gardens that was filled with the elaborate decorations and the sound of lively music.

Once they got off the carriage and passed through the grand iron gate, they entered the vast open area that held the different exhibits and performance booths. London's number one sanctuary for entertainment was a place that was filled with people in a number of hundreds that Lydia had never witnessed before. Which ever direction she turned to, there was people, people, people. She wondered where all these people had come from.

As they passed by the front of a circus tent, a Chinese orchestra music came from inside and she saw there was a pierrot show about to start where he was going to walk across a rope high in the sky in the large sidewalk they were walking on.

All of this was new to her, and her focus was nearly taken away, but Lydia reminded herself that she wasn't here to play and focused herself.

"Where would you like to go? I think the elephant's acrobatics would be interesting."

"What? What about the fairy egg?"

"That can come later. Since we're here, we should enjoy ourselves."

He pulled her on, regardless.

"Wait, Edgar, was it true that the fairy egg is sold here? If that's a lie, then I'm going home. I have no intention of spending my valuable day-off to go along with your self-indulgences."

"How harsh. Alright, then. But, once we're through with our business, spare me some of your time. Because it's your day-off, I wanted you to spend time with me without any sense of duty."

Lydia wondered if he wanted to keep an eye on her so much that he would use this work day off.

Geesh, I really can't understand what Edgar's thinking.

"If I don't feel any sense of duty, then I think there's no reason for me to keep you company."

"Why? I imagined that you'd be able to enjoy yourself."

"If you wanted to enjoy this, then why don't you invite a different lady? We all know there's an endless number of girls lined up who would be easy for you to trick. Instead of a sour-faced girl like me, you'd much prefer a lady who would be more than thrilled to accompany you."

"I really don't dislike your sour look. Although, I much prefer your smile."

"Like I said before, stop teasing me like that."

"Now, Lydia, you're considering things much too negatively, like how I'm teasing you, or that you're the only one who knows my secret. Is it unnatural if I thought of you positively and wanted to spend time with you? If I didn't invite you out, there'd be no chance of getting to know each other, all of that was my current honest feelings. It hasn't been that long since the first time we met, and it's just that I'm not at the stage to say that you're the only one for me, so I wanted to get to know you better, and I wanted you to get to know me, so that's why I invited you here."

Could he be telling the truth?

Ohh, it's because I'm tricked so easily like this that he enjoys playing around with me.

Even though Lydia thought that, she still nodded anyway.

"Alright. If it's just a little, then I don't mind looking at some of the attractions."

"Thank you. Let's foster our love like this, step by step."

Just when she thought he was serious, he'd quickly switch back to poking fun at her. Lydia smiled wryly.

Her attention has partly focused on her hand that he held in order to lead her through the crowd, she thought something was wrong with her to end up silently follow him.

She was mad at herself for being happy when complimented, even if it was a lie or flattery.

And yet, there still was a calm part of her that didn't trust Edgar completely. That part of her was convinced that he was attentive to Lydia because she had valuable usefulness.

The idea that Edgar would be attracted to her was impossible and that fundamental conviction of hers could not be rooted out, no matter what he said.

Because Edgar didn't match Lydia's vague idea of the perfect first meeting, or the reason a man and a woman's feelings would be drawn to each other and then foster a loving relationship, at all.

Her idea of an ideal suitor was someone, who at first, didn't seem to have any outstanding qualities, but actually was kind and considerate towards other people's feelings. Even if he was a little clumsy or untidy and you had to take care of him every day or even if his hair was tousled from sleep, she wanted him to be someone who understood and accepted the part of her that could see fairies, someone who would always be by her side, calmly and gently.

Someone, perhaps, like her father.

She was no match for someone who spoke sweet, melting words in upper-class Queen's English, or had a thin figure that looked flawlessly perfect in a tailcoat and had a sophisticated attractiveness in each one of his gestures or movements, or was impossibly beautiful, with the grace of a noble gentleman, or melted woman's hearts when he smiled but was spin-chillingly daunting when he coerced, a person like that was no match for someone like her, however you thought about it.

Even Edgar should be aware of what kind of woman would be the proper match

for him, and Lydia wasn't even an aristocrat in the first place.

She had heard that in recent times, even the wealthy middle class were able to freely enter the *ton*, and there were cases of peers with depleting funds who had to resort to selling off their estates and were living in a rented house, but when she would look at Edgar, she still thought that peers were a completely different race than commoners.

"There it is, that's the place that publicies that you can see a fairy show."

To Edgar's voice, Lydia looked over to the small pink-colored shed-like theater. Looking through the crowd of people, she could see there was something like stage built inside it and a man was making cards and flowers floating up into the air.

"It's just a magic trick."

"Maybe he's claiming that an invisible fairy is holding the card and flying around with it?"

"I don't see any fairy."

"If a fairy doctor says so, then it must be just a trick."

Once the magician was done with his show, the selling of the "fairy egg" began on the stage.

Different colored glass balls were lined up. The magician claimed that there were fairies inside of them. He even explained how to do the fortune-telling game which made the ladies in the crowd listen intently.

Edgar came back after he bought one and handed it to Lydia.

"How does it look? Inside."

"It doesn't look like there's anything in it."

"That magician is one of the entertainers who has a contract with this place. He constantly changes his appearance and name to perform all kinds of shows, but I haven't heard anything particularly suspicious."

"At least, this glass ball doesn't have anything that would attract any fairies. See how the color is turbid and how the glass isn't beautiful and it's a complete cavity inside? It would be different if there was something inside that fairies liked, but compared to this, you would have a better chance at calling fairies if you put clean well water into some sort of glass container."

"Then that means, blaming a fairy as the reason Lady Doris disappeared would be pushing it."

"Yes..... But it's too early to decide that it isn't the work of a fairy, I would need to investigate this a little further."

As she concentrated, Lydia handed the glass ball back to Edgar.

Just then, she heard the sound of shattering glass from inside the shed. The high-pitched screams of a woman came right after. It seemed like someone had broken one of the fairy eggs.

But then, like a chain reaction, a number of other glass balls around them shattered one after another.

It seemed like there were a number of people who were injured, which started a panick.

The magician raised his voice in an attempt to calm everyone down.

"Uhh, I would like to warn the ladies in particular to be careful in handling the fairies. Please make sure not to handle it roughly or speak ill of others. There are times when they can be angered and burst the egg."

".....Like you would know," mumbled Lydia.

"There might be gas that explodes in reaction to body temperature. I'd wager that the ones that exploded were just shills, but still, it's dangerous to have pieces of glass fly out around a crowd," said Edgar.

"Lydia, look up!"

Just then, she heard Nico's yelling voice.

Informed by the fairy cat who had apparently followed them by turning invisible, Lydia turned her eyes upward and saw that there was a fairy on one of the beams near the ceiling of the shed.

It was the size of an infant, with a wrinkled face like an old man, and a body covered in ruffled fur and small horns on its head - a bogey beast.

It rocked back and forth as it laughed on the beam, then turned its head towards her direction.

Its eyes met Lydia's.

(Hmmm, so you're able to see me.)

Suddenly, in a poof, it vanished.

Lydia realized its intention and wiped around to look down at the fairy egg in Edgar's hand.

"Edgar, throw that away!"

"Eh?"

She quickly swiped it away from his hand. A split second after she threw it in the opposite direction of the shed, the glass ball exploded.

She took a hold of him as he looked completely confused and exited the shed in an escape.

She scanned the area, but couldn't see any sight of the fairy anywhere.

"There was a bogey beast."

"Bogey...., I think I've heard of it, what kind of fairie was it again?"

"It's a mischievous kind. An ill-natured little demon. They aren't that smart and a species of the Unseelie court."

"And one of them was making the fairy eggs explode from inside the shed?"

"I'm not sure, the magician didn't looked panicked, and there could have been a number of the shills that made theirs shatter, but there's no mistake that the bogey beast took advantage of that situation."

She wondered if it had just happened to cross by. Or was it related somehow with the fairy eggs?

If it did, it would be too hasty to arbitraryly decide that fairies were unrelated with the case of Lady Doris.

Edgar held up Lydia's hand while she was deep in thought.

"You were injured?"

It seemed she was cut by a shad of the glass ball that had exploded as soon as she threw it. Blood trickled out from her fingertips.

She took off her gloves and inspected it, but it didn't look like the wounds were that deep.

"I'm fine. The cuts are small, they'll heal if I lick them."

As she said that, Lydia suddenly had a bad feeling, and swiftly pulled her hands behind her, away from Edgar's reach.

"What's there to hide?"

"I think I'm starting to understand what you might think."

"I just thought I'd be able to heal your wounds."

He gave her a grin.

"I'm fine!"

She really couldn't be too careful around him.

Lydia began to quickly walk away from him, but he invited her to take a ride on one of the boats on the lake.

She was regretting that she shouldn't have said that she wouldn't mind going around the garden just a little, but the Cremorne Gardens was beginning to turn dark, and the gas lamps were starting to beautifully glow, which made the atmosphere even more lively.

She couldn't think that Edgar would allow her to leave that easily.

"What were you doing?! You nearly were about to injure the earl!"

An orange-haired girl stood shouting in the direction of her footsteps. The people passing by weren't able to see the small ugly fairy that was standing there.

She realized that a girl yelling at nothing and by herself was drawing unwanted attention, and so she quickly moved over to the tree shadows and lowered her voice.

"Didn't I tell you to only target the girl!"

(But master, that human girl was able to see me. Yes, she not only was able to see me, but she figured out that I was the one that was shattering the glasses. I'm sure she's a fairy doctor.)

"So what? You're my slave, you only have to listen and do as I say!"

(....Yes, master.)

"You were suppose to cause an ill-omened commotion, and spook her and make her tremble in fear. Just like Doris, I wanted her to disappear from London."

As she said that last part over her shoulder, the girl wiped the helm of her skirt like she kicked it and walked off.

She was off to search for the reddish-brown hair-colored girl who was walking along side the earl together.

The girl was a frequent visitor of the earl's mansion and seemed to be on

friendly terms with Edgar Ashenbert, and she looked around the same age as her.

As long as one didn't get too distracted with her golden-green colored impressive eyes, she wasn't all that of an eye-catching beauty, and that made her think she was much more suited for the earl.

Since she was master of a fairy slave, she honestly believed that she was completely able to do anything with the power of fairy magic.

(Heh, like a lowly human could control a fairy. You and I are the slave of Master.)

Nico was listening to the grumbling whispers of the bogey beast from atop a tree.

(Thinking you're so high and mighty. The only reason I'm quietly listened to you is because it's the orders of Master. Hah, just you wait, you little chit.)

Just when you thought he held up his fist and railing against her, the bogey beast suddenly placed his hand under his chin and looked as if he was thinking up something.

(But, if that fairy doctor became suspicious, then it'll be troublesome. If she got in our way, then all of Master's hard work would be ruined.)

As he mumbled to himself, the bogey beast slowly faded away.

"Oh, geesh, it looks like there's going to be trouble ahead," grumbled Nico as he swunged about his tail.

"And the earl, if he was just joking around then I'd looked past all of it, but since I have no idea what he's thinking I'll have to keep an eye on him too, what a bother."

Chapter 3 - Caramel and orange

On the quiet surface of the lake, where there was no wind, and no ripple of a wave, a number of row boats glided across its peaceful surface. The lantern lights colorfully illuminated the row boats that were decorated in a foreign theme, making them look like they came out of a dream and the mixture of the numerous lights and elegant boat shadows crossed and mingled among one another, filling the lake with a mystical blend of colors.

Sitting on one of those rental boats, Lydia was thinking there are so many people in London who have too much free time. She watched a nicely dressed couple pass by on their boat as they were chatting and giggling with each other. Of course, Edgar was also another member of that high class society, who had no need to work and had plenty of time on his hands.

On a row boat that had room for ten people, there was currently the three of them, with Raven as one of them, who had been waiting at the floating pier for them. Two oarsmen had also climbed on the boat and were rowing in slow strokes with the long paddles.

“The climax of the Cremons Gardens is fireworks. The best seat is here atop the lake.”

“We can see fireworks?”

“Yes. Have you seen fireworks before?”

“No.”

“Then I’m lucky. I can be along side you during your fresh impression.”

Raven opened a bottle of champagne. She was handed a thin, tall glass and watched as she was poured the bubbly golden drink, but just the reflection of the flickering fire felt like it was enough to intoxicate her.

“Let’s make a toast. To my valiantly brave fairy.”

“Me, valiant?”

“Didn’t you protect just earlier. Even getting yourself injured.”

He’s over-exaggerating. And the ‘my’ part is unnecessary.

But, being with him after awhile, no matter how much Edgar talked to her sweetly, there was a part of her that thought that was just a common thing. It wasn't like she got used to it, more like, it wasn't something special but a daily routine for this person to make an elaborate performance and act like the center of the crowd where ever he went.

Even the bench that was covered with cushions was wide and plentiful, she felt that the distance between was unnecessarily close since Edgar had deliberately sat right next to her, but after she swallowed down the champagne it wasn't that big of a deal.

"Where did you see fireworks?"

After she said that, she wondered what she was thinking to make herself ask that question.

To tell the truth, Lydia had strictly decided to herself that she was not going to ask anything in regards to his past.

It seemed complicated, and once she found out, she felt unwanted troubles would come her way, and most importantly, she didn't have the intention of getting that deeply involved.

All she knew was that he was born into an aristocratic family, but was involved in a conspiracy, and made society believe that he and his family had all died, but in reality he alone survived and was sold to a wealthy man in America. He then escaped from there, and as he evaded his pursuers, he did anything in order to live...

She was only given a quick explanation, but if she were to honestly believe all of what he said, that would be just too much for her to handle, and so Lydia found it hard to believe and was half in doubt.

And so, she had been evading any topic or comments that would touch about his past even in their casual chit-chat.

"When I was a child, every time there was a party at our manor house there were fireworks. There was a natural lake on our grounds, and I remember there were a number of boats on the water just like this."

At his reply, she breathed a sigh of relief. It looked like she managed to not make him remember about his horrible experience in America.

However, when she thought about how he had lost everything that he was suppose to inherit, like the manor house and vast family lands and the venerable family name, then it might have actually been a sad memory.

Because in the past, he still had his family and friends by his side, and there was no need to hide anything behind his blessed beautiful looks and could have grown up smiling innocently.

Although she thought about it for a while, there was no reason for Lydia to delve any further than that. If there was someone who could share this man's past, then that person was someone who would share his future as well.

Edgar looked at Lydia with a not entirely satisfied expression after she suddenly went silent.

"You're not going to ask anything more about me?"

"Eh?Umm, I really am not that curious about your past."

"Oh, really."

Oh, no, I said it too coldly again.

"That's not what I meant, um, I believe that what lies ahead is more important than what happened. You're now a respectable England earl, and so what happened in your past is not something I should know."

She regretted for saying something so superficial and that made her sigh.

"Then, let me tell a story about a friend of mine. He happened to have the possession of an agate stone that was a 'fairy egg'."

The stone that Edgar showed interest and was called the 'fairy egg.' At such an unexpected name, Lydia turned back to face from curiosity.

"That's right, after I was told from Professor Carlton, I was convinced. The stone that he had was no doubt the 'fairy egg' which had an interesting anecdote about it, said to have sealed an evil spirit. But apparently he had lost it when he was a young boy."

"How did he lose it?"

"He didn't really remember at that clearly, but he thinks he was captured by the fogman."

And now the key word fogman has come out. It seems the real reason Edgar stuck his nose into this case was behind that.

"He had at least believed that was what happened at the time, because it was such a pitch black place he was in. Like he was cast under a spell, his body didn't move an inch, and so he was unable to escape. And then, two little fairies in the form of two young girls appeared before him. They were adorable little fairies who were wearing nice, pretty dresses. He had never seen fairies before, but he was made to believe that because he was in such a state of consciousness that he couldn't tell between dream and reality. And he tried to ask for their help. But then, Lydia, like the rule in all the fairytales, the two little fairies asked him what he can give them in exchange. The only possession the boy had was that 'fairy egg.' And so he gave them that. The little girls said they would help him and disappeared."

He then went quiet and looked up to the sky. The fireworks still hadn't started.

"And so, was he saved?"

"No. Most likely, the dark place he was in was some warehouse. He was carried out like a piece of luggage, and was put onto a ship and was sold."

Could he have been in the same place as Edgar who was also sold as a slave?

"Is that person still in America?"

"He's dead."

"....Are you trying to find his 'fairy egg' for him?"

"That's not it, Lydia. I want to find 'him.' There are times when I imagine that perhaps, he was kidnapped by the fogman and no one saved him and the real him is still out there somewhere, lying in the dark and cold. But if that's so, that's fine, because I'll be able to save him now. I have a reliable fairy doctor by my side."

He says he wants to save someone who is no longer alive. It was strange words that didn't sound like the usual Edgar at all.

Lydia just stared at him not able to measure the truth.

"A boy who has disappeared into the London fog.... I wonder if I'm able to find the boy, whose still said to be missing, and drag him out of the mist, would that erase the fact that he had died? Lydia, would you please help him?"

He plead to her with a calm, silent expression. She knew that what he asked was impossible, but she had the faint feeling that the one who was waiting to

be saved was actually him as he was also in the same situation.

With the disappearance of Lady Doris and adding the fact about the fogman which was the works of man, there could be the possibility that the reason Lydia was involved in all of this could be coming from the same reason.

There was no reason to find out about Edgar's past. However, if he was suffering from the accounts in his past, well, Lydia was the type to think that she shouldn't just stand and watch.

"Well, if there is anything that I can do...."

She replied, still unsure what he was truly asking from Lydia. If she said anything too easily, then there was a chance she'd be completely taken advantage of, but she wanted to believe that the pain he held within himself wasn't a lie, and so Lydia was confused.

"Thank you."

They ended up looking into each other's eyes unexpectedly.

Inside, she was panicking as not knowing what to do, but she remained still, perhaps because she felt like she was a mouse that happened to walk into the path of a lion.

Of course she was frightened, but she also felt like she wanted to reach out and touch the graceful lion and its golden fur. She gazed up at his lips that curved up to a thin smile looking for a possible glimpse for his beautiful hidden fangs.

Eh? Wh-what am I thinking! Oh, my goodness, could I have gotten drunk from just one glass of champagne.

There wasn't an once of romance inside Lydia's head which was in the state of a little mouse, but her shoulders were softly pulled to him.

"I was always thinking, you have the fragrance of chamomile. The same smell like those biscuits."

Oh, no, but just in the second she thought that.

"Ah, fireworks!" she gasped.

With the blasting sounds, a brightly lit flower emerged in the sky.

In one instant, Lydia's eyes were spellbound by the fireworks she was seeing for the first time.

"Oh, amazing! It's so beautiful...."

The tingling feeling that had been consuming her just earlier was gone. Lydia remained looking up to the sky, mesmerized by the fireworks, and at that sight of her, Edgar burst out laughing.

What's so funny, she thought, as she looked down to him as he was having a good laugh.

"Wh-What!? It really is beautiful. Ah, there's goes another one."

"No, it's just, you looked completely captivated by the fireworks than from me."

It makes me lose confidence, said Edgar; he was apparently in a good mood as he was still chuckling.

He sipped down all of his champagne and offered a serving to Raven. Of course, the servant strictly refused.

As he evaded the jesting pursuits of Edgar, the first one to bring his attention to the row boat that was quietly approaching them was Raven.

It was a sharp look that was targeted at anything that approached his master, no matter what it was, but the ones on the approaching boat was a young girl who was dressed like a member of the upper-class.

"Oh, my, if it isn't my lord. What a coincidence."

She was an adorable, pretty girl with large eyes and orange-colored spiraled hair, with white, purl skin like that of a bisque doll.

"Oh, good afternoon, Lady Rosalie Worpole. How are you?"

Worpole? Could she be related somehow to the baron family line?

Now that she thought about it, she remembered that the baron daughter had been living with a cousin, one-year older than her and an uncle.

Next to the girl, there was a man in his late thirties. One could tell in a glance that he had put a lot of money in his wardrobe, and he was quite handsome as well. She introduced him as her uncle whose name was Graham Purcell.

"It is a pleasure to meet your acquaintance, Lord Ashenbert. This is the first time for me to personally greet you, but I have seen you several times at the club in Piccadilly."

The man took off his hat and lowered his head, to which Edgar returned with his head.

"Ahh, which means, I heard while I was there, that there is a famous ladies' man

in the ton, I can see that must have meant you, Lord Graham."

It looked like both these men were the same type of rakes. Which means, they could be seeing each other as rivals, thought Lydia, as she sensed the cold presence behind Edgar's smile.

"Excuse me, my lord, but who would you have with you?"

The girl who said that, glanced towards Lydia with a look mixed with curiosity and contempt. Like she was being judged her worth, she was inspected from top to bottom, which made Lydia feel slightly unpleasant.

"This is Miss Lydia Carlton."

"Which Carlton would that be? What is her father's work?"

"I am the fairy doctor Carlton."

It was normal for a daughter to be ranked according to her father's social position in society, but Lydia replied with a sense of rebellion.

"Oh, my, so you're the rumored fairy specialist? You seem to be around the same age as me, but it must be tough to have to work."

A daughter from a good family didn't have to work. She understood that she was held in contempt with that meaning, but she held pride in calling herself a fairy doctor, so she didn't mind the scorn at all.

"Not really work, more like she is my advisor, and my trusted partner," said Edgar.

"But, my lord, isn't it a fact that she is under your hire?"

And now she was being looked upon as a servant.

"Miss Rosalie, do you think that King Arthur thought of the magician Merlin as his servant? You see, we have that sort of equal standing between us."

When she was defended like that, Lydia felt her heart unexpectedly beat a little faster.

"Oh, how marvelous. But if it was me, I would prefer to be the princess than a magician."

It looks like she wasn't the average reserved lady.

"By the way, where is Lady Doris who is always with you?"

Oh, my, goodness, Edgar, why did you have to ask something so daring. Lydia couldn't help but be worried, but unexpectedly, Rosalie replied like it was

nothing at all.

“She doesn’t feel well, so she’s recovering in the countryside.”

“Oh, my, that’s unfortunate to hear. It must be quite lonely.”

“Not all that much. Doris is a little too quiet and you must have seen how she was always following me around? Since I don’t have to look after her, I’m free to spend all my free time for myself.”



If she wasn’t pretending to be tough, then she was quite the cousin, thought Lydia. Her cousin was missing, for goodness sakes.

Or, was the truth being hidden from her as well.

“Anyways, my lord, would you mind if I join you on your boat? If you weren’t in the middle of enjoying your time alone with Miss Lydia, then I would be more than thrilled to join you.”

This girl must have feelings for Edgar.

But she sure was a girl who openly displayed her attraction. She even didn’t forget to give a side-ways glance towards Lydia’s direction like she was seeing her rival.

“Rosalie, that’s impolite,” interrupted her uncle.

“Oh, no, Lord Graham. I don’t mind at all.”

However, there was no way Edgar was going to refuse an invitation from a lady.
“Oh, really? My, I’m so happy. I was brought here by my uncle, but the conversation doesn’t last if you’re not among your youth.”

“I consider myself still youth, you know.”

“Uncle, you really must relinquish that rake name of yours and settle down.”

With a sour smile, her uncle looked over towards Edgar.

“If I may accept your kind offer, my lord, would you look after my niece? To tell you the true, I have a business affair after this, and so I was just being scolded by her in saying that I need to leave soon.”

“Yes, of course, it is a pleasure to be able to accompany a beautiful lady.”

I knew he was the kind of person to say the same thing to anybody.

The ever more defiant looks Rosalie was sending Lydia was making her feel disgusted and she didn’t think she would be able to continue enjoying the fireworks that were still being shot up.

“Then it was good timing, Edgar, I’ll be leaving now.”

“Eh, why?”

“If I’m late, Father would be worried.”

He shook his head a little like he was disappointed, but that was all.

“Alright, then Raven, escort Lydia back home.”

So you’re not going to stop me.

.....Well, I’m fine with that.

The pretty doll-like girl had her boat rested next to the floating pier and gladly changed boats to sit next to Edgar.

If she kept that up, Lydia thought there wasn’t going to be any troubles trying to woo her.

Well, it has nothing to do with me, she mumbled, and so Lydia left the lakeside.

Ladies are more happy to receive a hand-full of flowers from the road-side from the man they adore than a bouquet of fancy flower from a man they don’t care about.

She remembered those words of Edgar when she happened to see the Margaret flowers sitting in the vase by the windowsill of her room.

Lydia was honestly happy to be treated like a normal woman by Mr. Langley.

The way Edgar treated as a lady.... Was somehow something she couldn't honestly be happy about.

She had a seemly frightening feeling about being honestly delighted about that, almost like she shouldn't.

If she didn't keep her distance, she felt she might be dragged in and deeply wrapped up and messed around with.

She couldn't quite grasp what that feeling was called exactly, but Lydia was just simply scared.

On the table she had lit, Lydia closed the book that she couldn't concentrate on, and pulled out another book and opened its cover.

She picked up a violet flower that she had dried and pressed, and she was about to throw it away, but rethought that the flower had no sin.

The reason she brought back only this flower was just because it was one of her favorite kinds. There was no deep meaning behind it.

She just thought that its light coloration was rare; it had nothing to do with the fact that it resembled the same color of his eyes.

Anyways, she must not be misled by what Edgar says. She already knew from the start, Lydia honestly regretted every time she came across the thought that he might just be kind-hearted only to herself.

"He was just a lady's man in the end."

It was annoying to have a bad mood because of that, so she took a deep breath to calm herself down.

"Oi, Lydia."

She slapped the book shut. When she turned around, she saw Nico standing in the doorway. He entered the room and trotted over to her direction.

"What are you panicked about?"

"No-nothing."

"I followed after that bogey beast. And then I saw it enter the townhouse of that Baron Worpole family."

"Baron family, you mean the house of Lady Doris who disappeared?"

"Yup. On top of that, the one who was making the bogey do trouble was an orange-haired girl with twirled hair."

“.....Rozalie?”

“I don’t know her name. She was saying at the Cremorne Garden that she wished you would disappear from London just like Doris. It looks like she wants to get close to the earl. You should be careful.”

She had already sensed that she had feelings towards Edgar when she met her atop the lake.

However, it was unexpected news that she was the one who had given the orders to the bogey beast. Did she have the intention of injuring Lydia at that time.

But the thing she couldn’t dismiss the most was the part about ‘like Doris.’

Did that mean she wanted something to happen to her cousin Doris?

“But, Nico, why is the bogey beast doing as she says?”

“No, it was saying something like it had an actual master who wasn’t her. And, it was just pretending to follow her orders for the sake of its master.”

“Who’s its master?”

“I don’t know that, but that young girl didn’t seem to know anything about the master at all.”

Even if one is able to see fairies, it was dangerous to be in contact with them if you didn’t know how to handle them. And because of that, in the past, there were many people who were deceived by fairies and went through a bitter experience, which made them ask for the help of fairy doctors.

Particularly, it was common for the mischievous fairies who played the pranks to purposefully show themselves to humans to talk to them.

People in the past knew that even if you saw them, you pretended not, and if you heard them, you pretended not, and by doing that, people were able to evade danger, but now-a-days there aren’t that many people who could teach that to others.

If the young woman named Rosalie, remained unaware of the true master who is pulling the strings of the bogey beast as Nico says, and still in contact with the fairy, then that means she doesn’t have knowledge or understanding about fairies and thinks she has acquired magic powers.

That would be dangerous for her.

Even if Rosalie wished for Lady Doris to disappear, if there were ulterior motives of the bogey beast behind that, then that means Rosalie is also caught in the trap that the fairy set.

If she wanted to ask her about Lady Doris, she first needed to cut the ties between Rosalie and the bogey beast.

But she wondered if that girl would honestly listen to what Lydia said.

Judging from her attitude today, she thought that was impossible.

It looks like the case regarding Lady Doris was a much more complicated case than she imagined.

As she was mulling that over, on the other hand, Lydia was bothered about the ‘fairy egg’ Edgar brought up and the fogman. The glass ball of the fortune-telling game had nothing to do with the water sealed agate stone. And yet, Edgar thought they were linked.

She had the feeling like he was fixated on it more than it being just a simple related word.

Why?

It seemed somehow familiar with how Lady Doris was frightened of the fogman who was supposedly unrelated with the fairy egg fortune-telling game.

“.....Hm?”

For a split second, Lydia felt like there was nearly something that connected in her thought. But she was unable to grasp what that was, and now was lost.

But what she vaguely thought was that Edgar was still hiding something from her.

The Worpole baron family was new to the social circle as aristocrats, but it was a wealthy family. The current master is the sixteen year old Lady Doris. Her parents died in a ship accident ten years ago. On the same ship, her cousin Rosalie’s parents were on.

The two girls who lost their parents at the same time, had been living with each other ever since.

Their ward was Lord Graham Purcell who was a distant relative with the baron. Previously at the baron house, it was well known that Rosalie and Graham were doing as they pleased without regard to the rightful master Doris.

The dull and shy baron daughter and her showy, strong-willed cousin. Naturally, the one who came to grab the spotlight and be the center of the crowd was Rosalie and Doris was always by her side like a servant and did as she was told. However, Doris had the higher title. She was after all, the current head of the baron family. That's why her strong-willed cousin wanted to stand out more than Doris.

Even in front of others, she would periodically act cruelly to Doris and basked in the sense of superiority.

Rosalie stated to Edgar straightly that she was so glad her cousin is gone, when the two of them were alone together.

Her cousin was a girl who couldn't do anything on her own ever since she was a child. She was timid and a coward, and that's why Rosalie told her that the fogman would come to punish her since she broke the promise that they swore on the fairy egg, and that honestly frightened her and so she left London and is staying away in the countryside. That was also what Rosalie revealed to him.

Either way, she was a girl who really didn't have a tight lip.

Edgar had only met her a few times in a few social gatherings of the upper class, and she had always served as a handy source of valuable information.

If he would only just hint a sign of interest, she was more than delighted to answer. There was no trouble at all in retrieving the every single bit of inside information of the baron family than he expected.

And, now, for the next step. Which paun should he move.

As he thought, Edgar tied his brows deeply together.

It was like a game. Perhaps what he was trying to do was meaningless even if he were to obtain victory.

He forced that thought out of his head. Even if a game, once he started it, he needed to win. That was all there was to it.

How many more moves until checkmate?

"Welcome home, my lord."

To the butler who saw his arrival, he gave his hat and stick and forcibly handed over his coat and then Edgar walked over to Raven who had entered the entrance hall.

"Raven, how was Lydia? Was she jealous?"

"You wish to know if she showed signs of jealousy?"

Raven tilted his head as if he was confused at the unexpected question.

"Seeing at how I was getting along with another lady, one would think I'd have a chance if she should signs of being jealous, right?"

"Uh-hm, however, master Edgar, I was not given the order to make sure if she was jealous or not," he replied seriously.

"...Well, yes, that was so. I forgot."

"And I wouldn't be able to judge such a thing."

Treated as a living, breathing weapon, Raven was unable to feel his own feelings or will as his own. It seemed it was even more difficult for him to understand the feelings of others.

His eyes, which at one glance appeared pure black, had a faint green tone to it when you see the light reflect in them. Apparently, in his homeland, that meant he had the fierce and untamed spirit that rejoice bloody combat.

The child with the spirit that only bowed to a king and born to fight, had incredible fighting skills. At the same time, the child's human senses and feelings were dim, and didn't hesitate nor give mercy or need a reason to kill as it was ordered.

If there was no need for a heart in a weapon meant for battle, then he was the ideal fighter anyone would want.

There was no way to make sure if there was indeed a spirit for Edgar, but he knew that Raven was that sort of lad. However, there was no such thing as a human with no heart.

If one was treated as a weapon, then he was only left to act like one, but he was perfectly able to feel and think for himself.

Raven strived to serve Edgar, who came in place of his 'King,' not only by just listening to his orders, but keep a relationship of trust and loyally follow him. Edgar hoped that he kept that in heart and slowly turn those feelings to other humans besides his master.

Going up the hall stairs, and opening the door to his room, Edgar turned his focus to what he had asked from Raven.

"Ummm, then let's hear what you found that I asked of you."

"I safely escorted Miss Lydia to her home."

"Was there anyone suspicious?"

"No one appeared."

As he thought, he threw himself onto the sofa.

"Hmm. There should have been word that I was going to take Lydia with me to Cremorne Gardens, and I thought that the situation where Lydia went home by herself was a golden opportunity. Oh, well, it's not like the culprit was going to do the work personally, so it could have meant the culprit didn't have its men prepared in time."

"Uh, Master Edgar, will you be continuing to use Miss Lydia as a bait?"

"If it makes you feel uneasy, I could think it over?"

"No, that's not what I meant."

The order from Edgar to protect Lydia as well as capture the ones who attack her wasn't that difficult a bid to follow for Raven.

Of course Edgar understood what Raven wanted to say, he was thinking about the insensitive approach of willfully making Lydia a lure without her knowing it. There wasn't such a time in the past for him to show such a worry for someone and it to be one besides Edgar and his sister.

Raven's sister, Ermine, who died before they were able to obtain their freedom, and her memory was still fresh in their minds, and when Edgar remembered her, he was deeply saddened. She was against using Lydia and when he remembered how she said that, it was natural for Raven to be reluctant.

But even if Edgar didn't do anything, Lydia, who was in London and carried the name as the Earl's fairy doctor which attracted the curiosity of others, and as long as there were people who thought that they could make money off of her ability, there was going to be the possibility that she would be captured. Truth be told, he had gotten the insight that there were suspicious movements that were sniffing around on who were entering and leaving the earl house, and just when he asked Raven to guard Lydia, the near kidnapping incident happened at the park.

At that time, it was difficult to grab the situation because of the thick fog, and

since there were dogs used, Raven couldn't get around as far as to verify the attacker's motive.

In any case, if there were any threatening schemes, then Edgar thought it was best to quickly lure them out and knock them out. To find the enemy and eradicate all dangers was also in the best interest of Lydia as well.

And above all, it was for Edgar's goal.

"It's to determine which member of Prince's men he is. The culprit that's using ships for smuggling, and preparing the stolen goods according to orders put in, and even putting his hand in human slave trade is definitely in London."

The man called Prince who held Edgar captive in America was the head of some strange organization.

His name and origins and even the goal of forming the organization was unknown, but to Edgar and Raven who managed to escape from there, he was an intensely hated, loathsome man.

His men, therefore the one who in the past put the nearly-dead Edgar onto his ship and carried him to America and handed him over to Prince was the one he was going to have his revenge on was the goal for Edgar for the present time.

The one who meets the same conditions at that time has already been researched. However right now, there was nothing to determine if that person was just a simple criminal or someone faithful to Prince.

"Will the culprit make Miss Lydia his next target? We weren't able to determine if the attacker yesterday at the park was just a passing-by maniac."

"He's sure to; he knows that Prince is willing to pay a handsome fee for people who have a unique ability beyond that of a normal human. I know that one of them with special ability who was imprisoned at Prince's headquarters was also put on the same ship as I was, and in these past several years in London, there were a number of psychics who have disappeared. If the smuggler is one of Prince's men, and he found out that Lydia is a fairy doctor then he's sure to target her. He'll surely make a move again."

The Brit who was ordered by Prince and sent Edgar to America could only just have been a handyman but he was the one who directly responsible with Edgar's misfortune and hence the most unforgivable.

And Edgar wanted to indicate to Prince that he was alive and was rising up in revolt.

"Just a little more. And then I'll be able to avenge my friends."

There was a painful strength in his stained whisper.

When Edgar escaped from Prince, beside Raven and his sister, there were a number of allies who broke out with them.

However Prince's chase was ruthless and Edgar wasn't able to protect them.

"Lord Edgar, is your revenge for the sake of my sister or our allies? If it is, I don't believe any of them who wish such a thing."

Perhaps so. However it was Edgar who planned the escape and he was also the one to lead it. What else could he do for his allies who believed in him and followed but were mercilessly killed.

Edgar obtained the status of earl and so he was no longer an unidentifiable hoodlum. So Prince wouldn't be able to get his hands on him that easily. And if he was going to remain quiet and be sure to protect his identity and it would be best to start a new life that had nothing to do with the organization.

If he was able to throw away his past completely.

But he was walking on top of the sacrifices of his allies, and could he throw all that away? If he didn't have their help, then Edgar couldn't have managed to successfully escape.

"Raven, in the end, you're the only one left," he whispered as he rested his cheek in the palm of his hand.

Raven remained standing straight and lowered his eyes quietly to the floor.

"I wasn't able to bring any of them here when they helped me in our escape. Even when I promised them freedom."

"I'm sorry."

"Why apologize?"

"I think that none of them would have regretted it. If they saw you now, I believe all of them would be deeply happy. But, I don't know how to say it well."

"You've said plenty, Raven."

He stood up and placed his hands on Raven's shoulders.

This small eighteen year old young boy from the eastern globe of the world, he was the only reason that Edgar was here.



"What? Lydia, would you say that one more time?"

"I said that the bogey beast that appeared yesterday at Cremorne Gardens was apparently following the orders given by Rosalie."

"No, after that."

"It looks like the bogey beast may be somehow related to the disappearance of Lady Doris."

"After that."

"It's dangerous to be in contact with fairies if you don't know anything about them, so including that, I wanted you to ask Miss Rosalie and warn her."

For some strange reason, Edgar made a displeased face. But she thought it wasn't that difficult a task for him to cajole a young girl and persuade her.

"You can't? It seems like she would listen to what you'd say, and I thought she would accept it if you cautioned her, since you would be seeing her again, aren't you?"

"So you aren't the least bit jealous."

"Huh.....?"

Lydia had just arrived for work at the earl's house, and was about to enter her office when she was caught by Edgar and made to come along and spend time in the salon with him.

While she was at it, she decided to bring up what she was thinking last night about Rosalie and the bogey beast to him, and hearing what he said she wasn't able to figure out what was going on inside Edgar's head.

"Why would I have to be jealous? You're free to approach anyone you like, and if that means I won't have to be dragged around to different social settings then I would be grateful."

Ahh, for some reason, the more I'm with Edgar, the more bitter I become.

"Do you really think that?"

Of course I think so. So you're free to invite lady Rosalie or any other well-to-do family daughter as you please. It's a waste of your time to hand around with

me: was what she really wanted to say, but she didn't because that only sounded like she was jealous.

In no way am I jealous.

"Now, listen, I'm not here to talk about that. To ward off the bogey beast for the time being, it's best to keep a cross made of a rowan tree with you at all times. If that doesn't work, well, then I'll think of something else."

"Ahh, if only you would spend have of your heart that you do on fairies and send those feelings towards me."

She was thankful of the space they were in, sitting across from Edgar with a table in between them in a grand spacious room.

Last night Lydia made a fresh resolve to herself that she was just going to let Edgar's sweet words pass over her left and right, and so she glared at him with a heavy barrier in between them in mind.

"Please don't look at me with such skeptical eyes."

"There isn't any more a skeptical person than you."

I'm definitely going to smack back those smiles or melting eyes of his that's sure to easily put the guard down of other ladies, she thought and made her body even more tense.

"You really are on your guard more than usual."

Of course I would be.

"My lord, you have a visitor."

To the butler's voice who entered the room, Lydia was relieved. Finally, just when she thought she would be released from listening to him speak.

"Edgar! Oh, I've missed you so much!"

Probably not able to wait for the butler to lead her in, an orange-colored curly haired body came bounding in. And she went straight to Edgar.

"Good morning, my lady. You're even more beautiful today than before."

With an attitude that of a queen, she lifted up her hand and waited for him to greet her with a kiss. Of course, the girl didn't have Lydia in her sight.

"Oh, Edgar, there's going to be a solo recital by a pianist from Vienna at the Watts house. Wouldn't you like to go? It's only a small gathering of people who are very close with Lady Watts."

"I wonder if it will be all right if I intrude."

"Of course. If you would escort me, that is. And besides, everyone wants to get to know you."

Taking this opportunity, Lydia tried to slowly creep out of the room.

"Oh, yes, Rosalie, I was told that you apparently should keep a cross made of rowan with you. According to my fairy doctor, it's to ward off malevolent spirits."

But that made her stop in her tracks. If he said something like that, then she was sure to hear a retaliation.

And just like she expected, Rosalie's eyes sank into Lydia's back.

"Excuse me, Miss fairy doctor. Would you mind not making strange accusations at me?"

Having no choice, Lydia turned around to face her.

"It isn't an accusation. You're aware that a bogey beast is hanging around you right? That fairy is dangerous."

"It's my slave. It's protecting me, so don't speak like you would know."

"That's only for show. You know nothing at all about fairies. If that keeps hanging around you, terrible things will happen. It might even be related to the Lady Doris' illness."

What Lydia wanted to say wasn't about an illness, but the reason behind her disappearance, but she kept with the story about it being an illness as Rosalie had said.

"Are you saying Doris was my fault? Are you saying that I did something?"

"I didn't say that...."

"It isn't my fault! It's because she broke our promise. We both pledged to the fairy egg, and because she broke it, she angered the fairy. She was a coward and yet she had to spend her days trembling in fear, and so she broke her health and sneaked away to the countryside and her not being able to see anyone has nothing to do with me!"

Apparently Rosalie really did believe that Doris is recovering in the countryside. It appeared to Lydia's eyes like she didn't disbelieve the false announcement made by the baron house to keep up appearances.

Then that means she only had a quarrel with Lady Doris and had no thoughts about getting her in trouble and saying that ‘she should disappear’ was only her little wish.

But the fairy that was hanging around Rosalie was a bogey beast. Even if she only intended it to be a small quarrel, if that fae put its hands into it, there was a chance it would cause more trouble.

“But Lady Rosalie, there is a possibility that the bogey beast would put you or the person around you in a trap without you knowing it. That’s why...”

“You, you don’t like it how I’m so intimate with Edgar.”

Lydia could only think how the topic had changed out of nowhere.

“Huh?”

“That’s why you’re saying such things to insult me.”

“I have no interest in a philanderer like him!”

“That’s not convincing when you’re irritated like that.”

It didn’t seem like she was going to be able to have a serious talk about fairies.

She sneaked a glance at Edgar but he didn’t show any signs of settling down this situation.

More like Lydia resented him for instigating this.

He was enjoying the quarrel of girls that were after him.

But Lydia had no reason to fight with her.

She attempted to walk off, but Rosalie dashed in front of her and stopped her.

“Just because you don’t have the beauty or seductive charm that can match me, don’t try to get in my way by doing something like that. Besides, the color of your eyes makes you look like a witch. Or are fairy doctors not even human? Are you a fairy that’s taking the shape of a human?”

“What did you say?”

There was no reason for her to fight for Edgar. But if she was ridiculed for her looks that she was concerned about as a young woman, then there was nothing to keep Lydia quiet.

And to add to that, she grew up with the nightmare of being called a fairy changeling from her childhood.

“You’re not that great of a work to boast yourself. You only making yourself

look showy, and how many hours do you curl that frizzled hair of yours?" It looked like she hit the spot that she had a complex about, as she set a deep knit in her brows.

"Even if it was frizzled, better than that rust colored hair of yours."

"This is caramel!" yelled Lydia after being so furious and lost her temper.

The only one to call the mediocre hair color that Lydia herself couldn't come to like like that was Edgar. It was amazing how just one word would make it seem like a charming color, but it was embarrassing for her to be clinging onto something like that.

She looked over to Edgar's direction but it seemed like there was nothing for her to worry about him noticing her worry, since...

"Then, Edgar, which do you like better, orange or caramel?" asked Rosalie and turned his attention to her question.

"Let's see, I haven't had a taste of caramel yet."

What is that suppose to.....

Lydia saw Rosalie act like she was turning embarrassed as she was giving her a victorious smile, that made Lydia immediately understood his meaning and turned bright red.

Unbelievable! He's a frivol man whose just a quick worker with women.

"This is stupid, I'm not going to be part of this anymore!"

Pushing aside Rosalie, she crossed the room in wide steps and headed for the door. She hear the small 'You're so naïve' comment from Rosalie and she intended to hit her back by slamming the door behind her.

Even after she confined herself to her office, Lydia was still lingering with a disgusting feeling.

She stood by the window and looked at the carriage that was parked by the front entrance ready for Edgar and Rosalie, but when he lifted his head up to her direction, she rushed to close the curtains.

"It isn't a problem for me if he's a rake. Even if he kisses ladies whenever he meets them, it has nothing to do with..."

Turning around, she jumped to shut her mouth closed.

Raven was standing in the room near her.

"Wh-what is it? Couldn't you knock?"

"I apologize. I came in since there was no reply."

Was I so angry that I couldn't hear?

"Oh...., I'm sorry. But shouldn't you be accompanying 'Lord' Edgar?"

"Miss Carlton, Lord Edgar isn't that frivolous a man," he suddenly said with a serious expression.

So you heard. Lydia was suddenly in an awkward position.

"He's only frivolous in what he says. He wouldn't dare force his way with a woman. Although that would be different if she was wishing for that."

That's what you would call frivolous.

"That's why, Miss Carlton, would you please trust Lord Edgar just a little? Since you're hired as his fairy doctor, he wouldn't kiss you just for fun. As long as you don't allow it."

"I would never allow it."

"Then there should be nothing for you to complain about."

"O-of course not. If all was according to what you're saying. But, I don't trust him. Even yesterday or today, if I was to put my guard down, who knows what he would do. I'm only here as a fairy doctor, so I don't want to be treated as one of his female followers."

"I can bet on it."

"You're so loyal."

"You don't have to run and it will be safe to put your guard down."

He would do anything for the sake of Edgar. More than eradicating his master's enemies or those that got in the way, most likely Raven was attempting to soothe and calm down Lydia, which must be even more difficult for Raven.

She simply admired his loyalty.

However one would think about it, he was a master who was a difficult, unreasonable one to serve if you were his servant. However, to Raven, he was the only one who would accept every part of his, hence he was his irreplaceable master.

Because the only one who he says could accept the blood-driven, murderous sprite inside Raven and calm it down was Edgar.

And so if she continued denying Edgar, she felt bad towards Raven who trusted his master above all else.

"Fine then. Decide the amount you wish to bet on. But if he kisses me for fun, I'm going to punch that smart, straight face as hard as I like."

Raven only had his dark green eyes set onto her and slightly lifted up the corners of his lips, but that was all, so the bet was set.

If she really thought about it, Lydia needed to be kissed in order to win, but she would realize only long afterwards.

For now, until then, she was filled with the motivation to test Edgar.

In truth, she must have had the wish to test if he was thinking lightly of Lydia or not.

"One more piece of business, you dropped this," said Raven.

Raven placed a white, round object, which was a size that could fit in one's hand, onto the table.

"I found this on the floor in the salon just now."

She opened her mouth to say it wasn't hers, but she quickly shut it.

Because she realized that it was a white agate stone.

It wasn't pure white, but had a light green pattern that looked like the veins of a leaf on it.

A pettermint onyx?

When she shook it, she could hear the sound of the splish-splash of water. She rushed over to the window and held it up to the light, and saw through the thinly shaved part of the stone that there was some blackish water trapped inside it.

Is this the 'fairy egg'?

Is it the real one?

The one that was said to seal a devil sprite in it?

The one that Edgar's friend was said to have in his possession?

If it was found in the salon, then the one who dropped is was Rosalie?

"Uh, Raven. Do you remember what Edgar said on the boat yesterday? About the young boy who was captured in the London fog and said to have died in America."

Raven, who was nearly on his way out of the room, stopped, and turned around to face her.

“Yes.”

“Was that true? If it was Edgar’s friend, then it must have been someone you knew as well right?”

“There were many who respected Lord Edgar and was by his side as allies. Since all of us were sold and bought, we were all in the same situation, so I couldn’t exactly say who it was.”

“Allies, so everyone...”

“They’re dead.”

“Why?”

“Every one of them were killed. Prince doesn’t forgive traitors.”

The children who disappeared like the mist and sold off. The one Edgar said he wanted to save, perhaps wasn’t a certain someone, but maybe all of his friends and allies.

Knowing that it was impossible to rescue those friends who were not really taken away by the fog but sold and killed, he envisions that fantasy.

If they were just captured by the fog and not by a malicious human being. If they were just hidden in the fog, then he would do anything to find and rescue them. And like that, he was still in regret for letting them die.

Like a prayer for the repose of souls for all of the children’s souls, including his, Edgar is still unable to discard the ‘fog’ and the ‘fairy egg.’

“But, Lord Edgar was the one who met the two fairies.”

“Eh?”

“That’s what I heard before.”

“Is, is it alright for you to spill something like that to me?”

“It isn’t like I am reframed to speak of it. Although I know nothing about how it’s related to the fairy egg.”

She was surprised to be straightly told of it from Raven’s mouth, but it was something that Lydia had a small hunch about.

That even if that story was symbolically telling about the allies that were in the same situation as him, she thought that he was speaking from his own

experience as well. And if it was Edgar who was the one to meet the two fairies, then that would mean the one to originally have the possession of the ‘fairy egg’ was him.

An agate wasn’t that rare of a stone, but those that were of high-quality and had a rare coloration were considered as jewelry.

If it was a large stone, and came into the hands of humans then it would normally be broken into pieces and processed to be sold, but if it remained the same as it was found, then a wealthy family would surely had custody of it.

Then the young boy who had the ‘fairy egg’ couldn’t have possibly been of low class descent.

“Uh, were there any other people in your group who were children raised in the peerage besides Edgar?”

“No. No one that I know of.”

Edgar, who saw the illusion of the fogman in some dark warehouse. He traded this in exchange for help, but wasn’t rescued. Maybe he was still lost in the deep fog, along with his comrades and felt like he still wasn’t able to escape it. Even though he asked Lydia to save him.....

“Miss Carlton, I would have no regret if I gave up my life for the sake of Lord Edgar. I believe it was the same for all of us. But would it be painful for Lord Edgar even if there was no regret by the ones that died?”

“It would be painful, I think.”

The young man who asked that with a serious expression, lowered his eyes a little.

“Lord Edgar was always our master and leader. He never made complaints or asked for help, and stood by himself with everyone’s trust on his back. There were some comrades who stood equally with him and they opened up to each other, but it would be questionable for me to say if they were able to accept Lord Edgar’s weakness. Our leader never showed defeat, or regret or hesitation, and that was our pride.”

But humans are not that strong. She admired how Edgar carried that on his shoulders and yet he had the strong will to motivate and lead his band of brothers.

Perhaps, now that Raven had gotten his peaceful life, he was able to realize that.

“But now I just wish that he would rest his feelings a little.”

“All you need to do is just say that to him. He’s sure to think of you as an equal friend than master and servant.”

Raven only shook his head strongly.

“That’s impossible for me. The sprite inside me only obeys Lord Edgar because it accepts him as his master. If I make that pledge indistinct then someone disastrous would happen.”

Lydia didn’t know all that well about Raven’s spirit, but she understood that there must be a complicated reason that he must not level down his servant position.

“That’s why Miss Carlton, please don’t come to hate Lord Edgar.”

“Eh, it’s not like I hate him or anything...”

She was confused at what he suddenly said.

“Even if Lord Edgar isn’t perfect, will you not be dejected?”

“I don’t think of him as perfect. Because he’s frivolous and a scoundrel and a liar, he’s full of defects.”

Even though she said quite a lot of rude things about his master, Raven only gave a response of quickly leaving the room like he was satisfied.

Lydia was left standing by herself dumbfounded.

“So, what was his point?”

Did he mean that he wanted her to say to Edgar, who was no longer the leader in battle, that it was alright for him to take a rest.

Was Raven wanting Lydia to take up the role of listening to his master’s whimpers and complaints?

But I don’t have to be that unless he quickly makes a lover of his own. And besides, there are plenty of candidates lined up.

Out of the blue, Rosalie’s face popped into her head, and Lydia’s temper quickly resurfaced which blew away the sympathetic feelings she was feeling towards Edgar’s pain from Raven’s story.



Claiming that she had something she wanted to look up, Lydia left the earl house early.

Nico sneaked into the office that Lydia wasn't in, and quietly opened the closet door and took out the box that he had hidden in the back of it carefully not to make a sound.

When he placed his ear to it, he could hear a rough whispering sound coming from the box. The tin can that he placed in the box was speaking something to itself. It hadn't realized that Nico was listening to what it was saying.

(Rosemary, sage and basil, all the delicious smells of the herbs.)

The voice was hard to hear, but its intonation sounded like it was singing, so he could tell what it was saying.

(A bed bareel filled with rosemary, never imagined that there was such a wonderful spot like that in London.)

(Ohh, but I was tricked. A canning factory? I was sleeping on my herb bed and before I knew it I was trapped inside the can.)

"Oh, so you were canned while you were taking a nap."

Nico couldn't help but make that remark, and after that, the thing inside it went silent.



The thing inside this must have went into a herbed fish cannery factory and fell asleep in a bed of herbs, so it must be a fairy, and it was trapped inside one of the cans.

It must have forgotten the time from the pleasant aromas and sleep. What a foolish one, he thought. But since Nico was also a fairy, once he had his attention onto something, it was an everyday occurrence that he wasn't able to pay attention to anything else. Of course fairies never ever thought of themselves as foolish.

"But more than that, who was it that tricked you?"

The thing inside the can, shook the can violently from the built up irritation of being trapped inside the can and from the caution towards Nico.

"Hey, now, let's talk calmly. Who are you? If you answer, I'm saying that I will open this up for you."

Nico had been asking the same question for the past few times. The thing inside the can wouldn't open its mouth at first, but once it was put inside the closet and figured out that things were going to progress, it started to speak out in a quiet voice.

But that voice was hard to hear since it was trapped inside a can.

"You want to know who I am first? How could I reveal myself when I don't know what you are. You want to meet the fairy doctor? I can't trust you so that's why I'm checking you out first. Huh? I'm the one who can't be trusted? This isn't going anywhere."

It was quite the stubborn one.

Apparently the thing inside wanted out and went berserk here and there, making everyone creped out and hence no one dared to open it. So it figured that it was best to stay quiet, and now a suspicious fairy was nearly going to eat it and now it was taking precautions.

Nico told it that he wouldn't want to eat something like I, but there being a fairy who would want to eat a awful thing like a can was more unbelievable to it.

A can that only humans could open, and a human that the fairies could trust was only a fairy doctor. That's why the thing inside the can requested for a fairy doctor to act as arbitrator, but for Nico, since he couldn't say the thing inside

didn't have any ill intent, it was a problem.

It would be troublesome if it attacked Lydia as soon as it came out, and so after making repeated arguments and counter arguments, they were being persistent.

And in the end, their conversation would end without any answer. Because the thing in the can was sealed in, hence, its powers were sealed, it didn't have that much energy. Its active time period was short and because it fell asleep very quickly, it looked like they weren't going to be able to have a talk for a while.

However, he could understand how the thing inside would be extremely cautious of Nico. If it was tricked and put in this state, then one's level of caution would indeed rise.

He felt pity towards it, but if it turned out to be something bad, and it was sealed because of its wickedness, then there was no way that he would let it out.

Since this was a delicate situation, it was hard to decide if he should talk to Lydia about this. What made him hesitate was because she was chronically soft-hearted and she was sure to pity it than sense the danger.

That's why Nico cautiously put it in a box, so its voice wouldn't be heard by Lydia, and hide it in the back of the closet.

Just then the door of the room opened without a knock. Nico panicked and threw the can under the table cloth and jumped up to sit in the chair. He pretended like he was drinking tea by casually picking up a teacup, but the one who entered was Edgar.

Oh, darn it, I screwed up.

I needed to pretend to be a cat.

After Edgar returned home and opened the door to Lydia's office, the first thing that came into his sight was a gray-haired cat gracefully sipping tea from a teacup.

It was sitting on a tower of pillows on top of the chair so it could reach the table.

Its nose twitched like it was enjoying the steam and aroma, and after it took a quick sip, the cat returned the cup back onto the saucer.

It took a quick glance towards Edgar, and changed its posture as though nothing had happened. In other words, in a sitting position like that of a cat.

What was now in front of him was just an average, normal cat that made it seemed like the sight of a cat drinking tea just now was a figure of his imagination.

“I thought I heard that Lydia went home, I see that you didn’t go with her.”

“I quite like it here. Since fresh hot tea comes out immediately when you ring a bell.”

Leaning up against the cushion, it narrowed its eyes satisfactorily.

Its meow somehow sounded like they were meaningful words. Edgar was made to think again that Nico was perhaps not an ordinary feline.

He went to sit down opposite of Nico on the other side of the table.

“Say, Nico, what do you think Lydia thinks of me?”

“A shady philanderer.”

Was what he thought Nico’s cold stare was saying.

“Oh, well, that can’t be helped.”

“Oi, you’re agreeing?!”

“But for the time being, she doesn’t have a man she fancies, right? I think I still have a chance, you know.”

“Huhhh? Or rather, weren’t you after that curly, orange haired young lady?”

“Oh, Rosalie, we’re just friends. She thinks the same of me.”

“How half-hearted of you, the two of you were so close, that’s hard to believe. And generally speaking, even your attitude towards Lydia looks like you’re just joking around.”

Like he was disgusted of him, Nico leaned against the armrest and rested his cheek in his paw.

It was an unrealistic position, but not impossible.

“I don’t intend to be fooling around, it’s just that I don’t have that much confidence, and I don’t want to be jilted.”

“Liar. A girl like Lydia is just something rare for you. Let me point out that the world Lydia lives in is completely different from yours. Lydia is well aware of that and keeps her distance from you, so don’t mess that around.”

He felt like he was seriously lectured, and Edgar let out a sigh.

What is the reason that's keeping me from making Lydia stay by my side, he wondered.

He believed that a fairy doctor was needed for the earl family. Not only that, but he did have an interest in her and found her charming, and of course, he was well aware that their worlds were completely different.

She was filled with unpredictability and mystery, and he found it exciting to talk to her so that made him go after her. It was that sort of sensation, but knowing that their worlds were different and yet if there was no discord, then it was truth that his feelings were shallow.

"It would be nice if Lydia would just open up to me just a little more. Nico, what should I do? Since you know Lydia so well right?"

Even how he asks a cat was a game-like facetious feeling.

Like he was saying, How could I be frank with a gang member, he swished his tail around.

Or is he saying, How could I tell you for nothing?

He thought of something and called for the butler.

Hearing the order of his master, the butler left the room and came back holding a silver tray.

On it rested a silver container with a leg that held sweets that gave off a sweet aroma. After it was set down, Edgar pushed it towards Nico.

"These are chocolates with liqueur that just arrived from France. I'm sure you won't be dissatisfied?"

Leaning himself over just a bit, Nico stared quietly at the brown rounded objects.

A cat that had a necktie tied around its neck, picking up a chocolate in a graceful gesture, didn't appear all that mysterious.

Putting it in his mouth and rolling it over on his tongue, Nico narrowed his eyes in pure delight.

"You can have as much as you want."

"Don't lie to Lydia."

Was that his advice?

He thought that that was what Nico said as the cat pulled the silver bowl with his hands, or his two front paws, like he was cradling it.

Chapter 4 - The noble demon

'That' was once said to be one of the treasures that was prized by the Granada royal family.

The water agate that was said to have the holy water at the time of the Creation of the Universe. There was an old legend that said the demons who touched this water agate would be sucked inside the crystal and so the one who possessed it would not be harmed by evil spirits, or in other words it was believed to be a charm stone to ward off evil.

It was unknown how it was brought over to England from the Granada kingdom, but from how it had a fine, light green pattern like the veins of a leaf and the size of it being near an egg, it was eventually called the 'fairy egg' and when you brought it up and shined the light through the thinly shaved part of its center, you could see the shadow of the water that was said to have been trapped in it since the ancient times.

"No mistake, this is the one," whispered Lydia as she compared the water agate in front of her and continued to read the inscription in a book.

In its record, it says it was stored in the St Augustine's Abbey. However, in the 16th century, the abbey was faced with dissolution, and since then it was carefully hidden.

It was found out that this agate had sealed within the demon that had once shaken the city, and it was believed that it would be disastrous if it fell into the hands of the enemy country.

"Well, I guess if it was back then, people would believe that a demon might have that much power."

According to one legend, it was said that the royal family had custody of it. That sounded reasonable, but unfortunately there was no proof that it was pasted down till now.

This stone was said to have gotten into the hands of a nobleman collector. Even if it was the royal family or a peer, the idea that demons feared noble blood had

been circulating since the old ages, and so they wouldn't fear a stone that was said to seal a demon, and may have collected it as a rare precious stone, and it wouldn't be unbelievable even if there was a family that had taken care of it furtively.

"Father's articles are sure sentimental for a scholar."

Closing the book, she returned it to the shelf. Lydia had rushed back home in order to look up about this water-sealed agate, and although she was able to find a descriptive account about it, that was all the information there was and she was left to brood over it in her father's study.

She wouldn't be able to tell if there really was a demon hiding inside this water agate in front of her by staring at it.

"Anyhow, it if was bestowed to a peerage family, then it wouldn't be a mystery if it come into Edgar's household."

Lydia didn't know what had happened to his family, but at any rate she guessed that Edgar was kidnapped when he had this stone with him and sold.

If what Raven said was true, then during that time, he must have seen the two fairies.

They probably weren't real fairies, but it must have been two girls in clean, pretty dresses that made him think that they were. If they were real fairies, then they wouldn't break the promise they made with an exchange.

Which means the girl that accepted this stone, didn't know about that and yet had possession of this, so in other words Rosalie could have been the girl at that time.

(Oi, give me back that stone.)

When she turned towards the voice, she saw the bogey beast clinging onto the outside of the window.

"All right, why don't you take it?"

Lydia opened the window for it. However, the bogey beast didn't attempt to enter the room.

(It's useless to try to trick me with that. You're going to bring it to me.)

It looked like it knew that it would be sucked in if it touched the agate.

A holy stone that warded off evil. She wondered why this bogey beast went

through the trouble and hanged around Rosalie who had this.

If Rosalie wasn't the master of the bogey beast, then for what purpose did its real master have this creature stay near Rosalie?

She wondered if Rosalie being the owner of this 'fairy egg' had anything to do with that.

None of this was making sense.

"Shall I return it to the one who dropped it?"

With the agate in her hand, Lydia walked over to the bogey beast.

(Who, don't come this way.)

They bogey beast fralled around his thin arms and legs which made it lose its balance and fall off the edge of the window.

(You bloody woman! If it was my lord, he would have you immediately...)

"Who's 'my lord'?"

(No-nothing. Hurry up and come outside. My lady is waiting for you in her carriage. She came all this way to have her possession returned to her.)

Rosalie is here?

Then I'll have to met her and solve my unclarified questions.

Lydia gripped the stone and walked out of the room. A carriage was parked at the corner of the road a few houses down. She was told by Rosalie to get on like an order, and Lydia did as she said.

"The Arab servant of the earl had said that he handed my stone to you."

She thought that Raven really wasn't an Arab, but she wasn't sure of that so remained silent.

"Yes, I have it. But Miss Rosalie, do you have any idea what that is?"

"It's a magic stone. It grants any of my wishes."

The carriage started to move.

"Where are we going?"

"To a place where we can talk quietly. Miss Carlton, isn't there something that you wished to say to me?"

She didn't see any sight of the bogey beast inside the carriage.

"Could you first return the stone to me?"

Of course, since it wasn't Lydia's, she couldn't keep it herself, so she handed it

to Rosalie.

"Say, how long have you had that fairy? Let me guess, since you obtained that stone?"

"Oh, no, I believe it was some years after. This stone is the egg of a fairy. It apparently takes quite some time to hatch, but a fairy will be born from this. To serve its owner. That's what I was told."

Even if it was called the 'fairy egg' it was impossible for a fairy to be born from a water-sealed agate. Because the thing inside it isn't able to get out on its own. That was a lie that the bogey beast told Rosalie to deceive her to begin with. That was what Lydia wanted to tell her, but seeing as how Rosalie was having a conversation with her calmly, she thought it was best not to say something what would deny what she had just said.

At any rate, the bogey beast knows something behind this agate, and approached Rosalie. The fairy was plotting something that had to do with the 'fairy egg.'

"Uh, Lady Rosalie, how did you obtain that stone of yours?"

To her question, Rosalie made a troubled face.

"The person who gave you this, I wonder why that person would relinquish such a precious stone."

"....What are you trying to say?"

She was glared at with a harsh tone.

"I just think that the 'fairy egg' isn't something that would grant the wish of his owner, and so I wanted to ask about the previous owner."

"Fine, I'll tell you. The person who owned this before me wasn't able to receive the blessing of the fairy. Of course he wouldn't, even if he had the stone, that was because he stole it."

"Stole it? Really?"

"That's the only explanation. That's why the fairy decided to come to my side. We're almost there. To the place where I met this stone. It's a place where we can talk in peace."

It was turning to dusk, and the fog was coming out again. The place where the carriage stopped was somewhere near the harbor and there were old buildings

lined up around them.

Rosalie entered one of the warehouse-like buildings that looked as if it hadn't been used for decades. Lydia followed her but she only saw that it was filled with dust and cob-webs. There was a round window up near the ceiling which made dark and moldy.

Opening a door to a small room, Rosalie stepped in and stopped in its open, empty space.

"Eight years ago, I believe it was. There was a young boy who was lying here. He looked like some child of a vagrant and was wearing clothes that were burnt and had holes and covered with dirt. That's why I immediately knew. This boy had done something wrong and was caught because of it."

"Eh, wait just a moment. How could you determine that..."

"Of course he was. His arms were tied together; a child that hadn't done anything wrong wouldn't be in that state. Besides, do you think a child that would sleep around at the harbor of downtown has never stolen anything before?"

Lydia was appalled at how she could just illogically jump to such a conclusion, but for a young lady who thought the world revolved around her, there must have been no other way she could have thought of it.

"That boy asked us for help him. How impudent of him to ask such a thing. But I noticed the stone that the boy had in his hand, and I told him that I'll help him if he gave me the stone, but such a beautiful stone like this surely wasn't some ordinary cheap rock. There was no mistake that the boy had stolen it. There's no reason to help a thief. That's what I told him."

"Did the boy get angry?"

"I don't know, he didn't look like he had that much energy. Now that I think about it, Doris was terribly worried if he might come back to get even with us."

So the one who was with her was Doris.

"The reason Doris is afraid of the fogman is because of that boy. Because that boy was mumbling something about the fogman in his sleep, so she must have believed he was taken away by the fogman."

Two young girls dressed in clean, pretty clothes in a dirty warehouse. They

appeared like two little fairies....

As she was in deep thought, Lydia knelt down to the floor that the boy was said to be lying on.

She reached down to touch the floor covered in dust.

She felt like she was touching the part of Edgar's past.

If she was able to reach out through time to the deep, foggy darkness, then she would.

How stupid of her to think such a thing.

And then a thought came to her. If it was Edgar who was lying here, then how would he think of the two girls who wondered into here.

He couldn't have possibly believed they were really fairies. Even if they looked like fairies then, once you thought about it later, you could figure out they were really human.

Either way, he handed the water-sealed agate to the girl.

He handed over the only thing that could have proved his origin to an unfamiliar girl, whether she was a fairy or human, was probably because that was the only chance to save himself.

But he wasn't rescued, and it took many years to finally escape.

And lost so many people because of it.

If he found out that the two girls who took away his water-sealed agate was actually Rosalie and Doris.

....Or, perhaps, he already knows?

Was that why he stuck his business into the disappearance case of Lady Doris?

And told Lydia about the fogman and the 'fairy egg'?

Oh, wait, hold on a moment.

If that were so, then what is Edgar planning to do? What if he had no intention of helping to look for Lady Doris and.....

Sensing the wind made by a swinging door, Lydia turned around. What she saw was the door being shut, and at the same time, heard the latching sound of a lock.

"Lady Rosalie? What are you doing? Stop fooling around."

"I'm not fooling around."

"Open the door!"

She pounded on the door, but Rosalie only snickered back through the door.

"Honestly speaking, you're a nuisance. You don't suit the earl at all, so don't get close to him."

"Stop playing around!"

"Since my fairy says that this is the best way to make you understand, I'm going to have you stay here for a while."

".....Bogey beast..... Don't trust what it says! And Edgar too, he's also plotting something wicked. Lady Rosalie, you mustn't be cajoled by what he says!"

"See? I knew you were jealous."

"Oh, would you just listen, you're wrong....."

"Well, farewell, Miss Lydia."

With those last words, however much Lydia pounded on the door, there was no response from outside the door.

"Oh, no, I should have brought along Nico."

But he was quite pleased with the earl house's soft chairs and tea so he must be staying in her office. He probably wasn't even back home yet.

"Oh, he really isn't reliable when you need him."

At any rate, Lydia fount back against the fear and panic that was building up inside her and tried to stay calm.

She raised her voice and yelled for help. But she recalled this area being only empty buildings.

The small room that only had the light from the cracks of the door made Lydia fall into deeper despair.

She wondered if Edgar was also feeling this way. He was still a young child, and yet he was left weak and alone in such a place. Just imagining it made her feel out of breath and unbearable.

She couldn't remain still and yelled out as she banged on the door. She even slammed her body against it.

And then, there was the sound of a crack, and the door frame fell out of the hole in the wall and Lydia went flying out and crumbled down with the body of the door on the outside floor.

"You're kidding....., no, but, I couldn't have that much superhuman strength..... Oh, the latch part of the doorway was rusted. I guess I was saved to be in such an old warehouse."

But just because she was able to escape that small room, the door of the warehouse itself had a lock on it. This door was made of steel, so there was no way she could break it down.

But thanks to the light shining in from the skylight and there being plenty of room, she was able to remain much calmer than before.

Now that she thought about it, Rosalie had the key to this warehouse and opened it up herself.

Oh, no. Am I going to be left in here alone and die emaciated?....., oh, but she wanted to think that Rosalie wouldn't go that far.

Lydia decided to search inside the warehouse for a different exit.

Rosalie had the key to here. Since she had gotten in here when she was a child and found the young boy who was here, then that means that this building might belong to her family.

But, if that were so, that means the one who had locked the boy up here, would be a member of her family.

Which means, the one who sold off Edgar, was someone related to Rosalie....?

She gradually became confused in her own thoughts.

That was because Lydia was dragged into this mess without being told of the important details.

Most likely, Edgar knew quite a lot about what was going on. He knew, and he was plotting something.

Most likely, Lydia was being used for his scheme.

"Oooooh, and he said he wasn't hiding anything, the liar...., ahhhh!"

She gave out another yell because her foot tressed through a floorboard and she fell down.

When she tried to get up, she heard a faint, whispering voice.

"Is there.....someone there?"

It was the voice of a young girl.

"Eh, wh-who is it?"

"I'm sorry, uh, I, my name is Doris Worpole."

"Doris...., you mean the baron daughter?"

"Yes... Um, if it isn't rude of me to ask, would you be able to help me out? If you are not a member of those bad men."

She walked over to the door where the voice came from. That door also had a latch that locked it shut, and so it couldn't be opened from the inside.

When Lydia lifted up the latch, the girl who came out from inside came falling into Lydia's arms.

"Are you all right?"

"Yes...., my strength went out after I felt relieved so suddenly."

"Um, I was also locked in another room here. I was looking around for an exit."

"Oh, my, then Uncle also brought you here?"

"Uncle? So the one who locked you up...., was Lord Graham!"

With her hair let down and the plain clothes she wore, she didn't resemble a nobleman's daughter at all, but the girl with the worn-out face must have become disappointed from the realization that she wasn't saved and went over in a tired way to sit down on a wooden box.

According to her story, if the front entrance door was locked, then there was no other way out.

This warehouse belonged to Lord Graham who had a shipping business and she and Rosalie had sneaked in to explore inside in the past.



She must be talking about when they found the young boy, but more importantly, Lydia wanted to ask about Lord Graham.

"To tell you the truth, I had found out that my uncle had been using the Worpole family fortune. And so I decided to ask for help by writing a letter to my tutor in the past, but he found what I was doing... For a while, I was locked up in a room in a house that apparently belonged to one of my uncle's men. But this morning I was thrown into here, and was told I was going to be sold off to somewhere overseas. It seemed like he had been doing that sort of practice from the past,I can't believe that not only had he put his hands on our fortune but committed such an atrocious crime...."

"Then it wasn't like you had disappeared because of the bogey beast."

"Bogey....?"

"Miss Rosalie's servant fairy. I was told that you had a quarrel with her and was terrified of fairies. And so I was told of your disappearance by Ms. Marl and was searching for you."

"Miss Marl came to you? Um, but, then you are..."

"My name is Lydia Carlton. I'm the fairy doctor hired by the earl of Ashenbert. Miss Marl was worried about the story you were saying about the fairy and

came to visit the earl asking for help."

".....The Earl Ashenbert..."

Doris let out a sigh of relief. She must have felt confirmed that Lydia was on her side.

"I was indeed fearful of fairies. I had made a pledge with Rosalie when we did a fortune-telling game and promised hold secrets against one another, but I, I couldn't tell her the truth about our uncle. Because it was such bitter news.... And Rosalie got along well with our flamboyant uncle, and seemed like she trusted him, so I couldn't say anything without any proof. But she realized that I was worried about something and looked depressed, and so I angered her."

"And so you were threatened that you will be attacked by the fogman?"

"Well, yes... But I don't think she was serious. Rosalie does say hurtful things often, but she isn't cruel at the core.... And besides, I have been afraid of the fogman up till now, but I think that humans are more terrifying than fairies."

She might be right. Fairies were good neighbors as long as you knew the rules of their world.

The inside of the warehouse grew darker. When it turns night, they were sure to be engulfed in pure darkness. And it will grow colder.

She didn't know how long Rosalie was planning on locking up Lydia, but she wasn't going to remain waiting here patiently until she was satisfied.

Because there was a possibility that Graham's men might come to carry off Doris.

"Anyways, Miss Doris, we cannot give up to get out of here," said Lydia with all the energy she could breathe out and stood up.

"But, what should we do?"

"Let's look for something we can use for a tool."

Just then, she heard the strange crackling laughing voice. When she looked above their heads, she saw the bogey beast sitting atop one of the beams.

"You....., how dare you say such a wicked thing to Miss Rosalie. What are you planning to do with me!"

(Fairy doctor, you're in our way.)

"What have I ever done to you? If you want to put together Rosalie and Edgar,

you're laying the blame on the wrong person."

The bogey beast jumped up from the beam and dropped down on top of the wooden boxes that were pilled up.

(Hah! That human girl, does she actually believe she would have the chance to grab the earl. What an unfortunate noddle she's got.)

"What are you plotting to do?"

The bogey beast snickered sonically again. Widening its ugly lips that split across its face even further.

"Um, Miss Lydia, is there something there?"

Doris leaned over to her frantically.

"Yes, the fairy that's hanging around Rosalie. You can't see it?"

"Nothing.....there's nothing that I can see. Every so often it would move something that's near by it to show me."

(That girl is a dull one. Since she can't even see me when I'm making myself appear like this. That baron daughter seemed like she would useful for Master, but since she's useless, I decided to use her cousin.)

"Master, so your real Master.Would that be Lord Graham?"

(Huh? Don't make fun of me. Why would I serve a messily human?"

The Bogey beast's master isn't a human.

It appeared by Rosalie who had gotten the water-sealed agate.

Its master, perhaps, was the thing said to be sealed within the agate.

"....A demon....?"

The fae made a tut-tut sound with its tongue.

(Master doesn't like to be called by that. Master doesn't want to be put in the same group as them. Because Master is much stronger than a demon, a great fogman!)

A fogman is inside Rosalie's water agate....

Satisfied with the shocked look upon Lydia's face, the bogey beast was elated and got carried away and started to ramble on.

(It's terrible how he is trapped inside a rock like that. And to top it off, all of the humans that possessed that stone all had noble blood that didn't even let him let out his voice.)

Just like her father had written, noble blood must have been protecting the ‘fairy egg’ all this time.

It was noble blood that had been protecting it so the demon’s power who had been trapped inside it didn’t leak out even a little.

Not unlike the newly formed Worpole family, but old blood that continued from the Middle Ages, had the latent power to ward off evil forces.

(But, he will finally be able to be free. I, the great bogey beast, had picked up his voice, and helped him up for that. Ahh, this means luck is finally heading my way. I am going to get back the old ways with the lord fogman. Children these days aren’t scared at all when I pinch them. What do they think of this great bogey beast.)

At a child’s age, people are more able to spot fairies, but recently, that hasn’t been the case. Perhaps because the existence of fairies has become dim, and people weren’t hearing the stories of terrifying fairies, they wouldn’t know what happened even if they were pinched.

(Watch out, you messily humans. It will be the rebirth of the lord fogman. The London fog will once again bask this city in fear. We aren’t going to let the Blue Knight Earl descendant get in our way. This time, for sure, lord fogman is going to lay him in his coffin!)

“What has the earl ever done to you two.”

(Of course he did. The one who sealed Master Fogman was the Blue Knight Earl. If we break the water agate, then Master would be able to get out, but because he’s been sealed in it for so long he’s grown weak. But his powers will return if he eats the Blue Knight Earl who sealed him. I’m preparing the conditions so that as soon as he is released, he will be able to gobble him up. With his death comes the revival of my master!)

“Miss Lydia, is everything all right?”

She felt faint and nearly swayed. Doris quickly steadied her.

(The Blue Knight Earl who has been missing for so long has finally returned. Which means all the conditions are met!)

The one who was granted the title of Blue Knight Earl was the man who pledged his loyalty as the lord of the fairy land to the King of England. His descendants,

the heirs who inherited the Ashenbert title, were each called earl, but the earl had been going back and forth between the human world and his land in the fairy world, and legend says that he had magical powers.

If that was true, she didn't know which earl from each era, but there was an earl who aimed to punish the fogman who had been kidnapping people by swallowing them into his fog, and used an agate stone that had holy water sealed in it, and sealed the evil fairy within it.

From that time until now, the fogman had been plotting and waiting to exact his return and revenge.

For a long time, the fogman had to wait patiently inside the agate that was kept in the watchful eyes of the abbey and the old nobleman's house, but when the 'fairy egg' got into the hands of Rosalie, it seeped out some of his magic gradually from the agate, and started making its move.

In response to the calls of the magic, several years later, the bogey beast appeared. It joined forces with this small fairy, and the fogman took advantage of Rosalie who had ties with the ton, and searched for the earl who inherited the title of the Blue Knight.

It was only a month ago that Edgar Ashenbert, the heir of Blue Knight Earl who had been absent for three hundred years, had appeared. His name had already been known throughout the ton. That means, ever since Rosalie had met Edgar, the bogey beast and the fogman had their eyes set on him as the one to exact their revenge on.

But it was absurd for them to take their long grudge from hundreds of years ago, because Edgar wasn't the real bloodline of the Blue Knight Earl. Of course, he wouldn't have the power to fight with the fogman.

And Lydia wouldn't have the sort of power either.

Edgar must have some sort of plot up his sleeve, and stuck his business into Lady Doris' disappearance, and came in contact with Rosalie, but in a matter of speaking Rosalie was being manipulated by the fogman in the agate and the bogey beast and made to get close to Edgar.

It would be all over if the fogman managed to get out of the agate. But what should she do....

As Lydia tried to think of something, she stole a glance at the bogey beast. If the fogman inside the agate has partnering up with this little mischievous fae, then that means it couldn't do anything without this fae's help.

Because it was sealed, it had to resort to the help of others, and the only one who responded to its calls must have been this one.

Then all she had to do was make sure this bogey beast didn't interfere anymore. She looked around to see if there wasn't anything that could help her catch it. And then Lydia's eyes looked down to find an empty glass bottle laying on the floor by her feet.

She hid it under the hem of her skirt, and pretended to swoon to kneel down. She gently wrapped her fingers around the bottle.

She planned to yank out at least one of the hairs from the chest of the bogey beast covered in thick hair and put it in the empty bottle. For a fairy who had no true body, even one of its hairs was a part of its soul. When it tried to get its hair back from the bottle and enter it, she planned to screw the cap and trap it in.

It was only a bottle. It couldn't trap the fae in it forever, but it should be able to gain her some valuable time.

(What's the matter, fairy doctor? Are you trembling in fear hearing that I was with the lord fogman!)

“.....Oh, such a terrifying fairy....., I don't want anything to do with it.....”

Lydia acted like she was trembling and crying.

(Well, even if you were a fairy doctor, if it was a young chit like you, then you would be no match for us.)

The bogey beast held up its head and strutted over to Lydia. It brought back its lips to make a disgustingly grin and leaned over to look at her expression.

Now! Lydia whipped her hand out and lunged at the bogey beast.

But it instantly shranked its body down to the size of a mouse and dogged Lydia's arm.

Before she could react, the bogey beast yanked a hair from Lydia's head and threw the hair it got into the glass bottle and capped it shut.

Doris rushed over to Lydia who suddenly lost consciousness and fell over.

"Miss Lydia, what's the matter? Wake up."

But no matter how much Doris called, or shook her body, Lydia didn't wake up.

She wanted to trap the bogey beast but failed.

In turn, the fairy trapped Lydia's soul inside the bottle.



When Carlton made a visit to the earl's house claiming that Lydia hadn't come home yet, it seemed like he had already went to several places to look for his daughter and to top it off the thought of picking up a hack completely slipped his mind, so he apparently had walked all the way to the earl's residence.

According to the housekeeper's account, Lydia had left to go home early sometime just after noon and shut herself in Carlton's study, but then went out again sometime in the evening.

When she left, Lydia said she was going out to give back something forgotten to someone and she only had on light clothing that didn't look like she was going to stay out long.

"Pardon me, my lord. I thought she might had some sort of business here, so I came."

When Carlton found out that Lydia wasn't there as well, he looked like he was about to take off again.

"Mr. Carlton, please try to calm down. I'll also go around to places that she might have gone to," said Edgar to prevent him from leaving.

He had his butler prepare his coat and hat, and called for Raven.

When Edgar heard this news, Rosalie immediately came to mind.

After the solo recital was over and he returned home, Rosalie made a terrible fuse that she had dropped something. As soon as Raven said that he had handed the thing he picked up to Lydia, the color of her face changed and she sped out of his house.

Raven said that what she dropped looked like 'a stone similar to an Easter egg,' but Edgar intuitively knew that it was the 'fairy egg.'

That originally was his possession.

In the 'Wonder Chamber' that took up a corner of the large manor house that Edgar grew up in, there were endless numbers of rare treasures from all ages

and countries that were collected by his past generation family members. Like its name, it was a room that was made to surprise the guests that entered it. There were numerous relics with strange and interesting histories and although it might appear vulgar or gross to gaze in wonder at unidentifiable mummies and stuffed animals but that wasn't unusual in the families of the peerage.

The 'fairy egg' was just one of the many artifacts that were on display there. With a pattern that looked like it was covered with thin veins of a leaf and the water that was trapped inside. As a child, he was drawn to the mysterious movement of the water's shadows that moved inside the stone.

He didn't know that it was an agate, or its other name was the 'fairy egg' or the legend behind it and had secretly taken it out off his father's 'Wonder Chamber.' He remembered that he always had it hidden in his pocket. But couldn't remember when he lost it.

Until he found out that Rosalie had that agate stone.

The first time he met her was at the seat of a tea party hosted by a certain noblewoman. She claimed that the glass ball used in the fortune-telling game was a mere child's play and so Rosalie showed that agate stone to the young ladies there.

At that moment the jumbled memories of Edgar immediately pieced themselves together.

A hazy memory of a cold dark room he was tied up in. Plagued by a horrifying nightmare and not being able to tell dream from reality as he feared the approach of the fogman. The two girls he thought were an illusion. He remembered that he handed over the water-sealed agate stone he always carried around with him to them.

And then, at that moment, he realized. If Rosalie was the girl from that time, then the one who was the cause of all his pain and torture was someone that was in close proximity to her.

From then on, Edgar narrowed down the names of the one who was involved in his kidnapping to Lord Graham who was related to her and started his investigation.

He immediately found out that Rosalie was unaware of the criminal acts of

Graham. She was just a selfish, egotistical, naïve young lady.

Since he found that out, Edgar wasn't all that interested in the bogey beast that Lydia was talking about. There was no mistake that Graham was unrelated to that.

So he figured that if Lydia hadn't come home and something happened, it must only be another fight that continued from the one this morning with Rosalie and so unrelated with Graham.

But Graham was near Rosalie. If he found Lydia, then the situation would turn worse.

"Um, has Lydia gotten herself involved with something dangerous again?"

"Everything's fine. I think she's just kept back by a little willful acquaintance," said Edgar in a calm tone like no big deal as much as he could. Since Carlton showed such a worried face to him.

He was a man on the thinner side and his appearance made him look tired and aged, and it was hard to try to find a resemblance with Lydia, but he pushed up his round spectacles that played up his goofy appearance and looked straight in the eye at Edgar.

"My lord, Lydia has her trust in you. A fairy doctor's job comes with its dangers but if my daughter has chosen to work for the earl family, would you please protect her."

The scholar-like sharp eyes that were used for observation must have figured out what sort of character Edgar was.

He must also have realized that Lydia was involved in some sort of dangerous incident.

And yet he decided that he wouldn't press any further if Lydia had her trust in him.

He did resemble his daughter as a father who also had a soft heart.

"Yes, of course. Your daughter saved my life, and I'll do everything in my power to protect her."

Carlton must have been satisfied with that response and went home.

He wasn't lying when he said he thought that she saved his life.

But Lydia didn't trust Edgar like Carlton claimed she was. Of course she

wouldn't

It was normal to think that one should keep their distance away from a phony criminal.

Edgar himself, couldn't show all of the cards he had in his hand.

To tell the truth, she was different from Raven and his past comrades, so he was confused at how much distance he should put between them.

She wasn't someone who shared the experience with him in the depths of despair and poverty and even if Lydia was told of someone else's unlucky past, it would only be troublesome for her.

He couldn't be sure if that could be a reasonable excuse to take advantage of her and use her without telling Lydia the truth and his circumstances, but in the end Edgar only was using her half-handedly.

"Hmm, so you do have some conscience that condemns."

He felt that the meowing voice coming from the floor which was aimed at him as he had on a troubled expression was Nico.

"Nico, where are you going?"

"To look for Lydia. I can't rely on you any longer."

He watched as Nico dashed off outside the door and disappear, but that could have just been the fog that was passing by.

Edgar took ahold of the stick that was held out to him by Raven and stepped outside.

"Lord Edgar, I had just gotten some news from one of our informers."

"Is it bad news?"

"At this timing, yes."

".....Was the man who attacked Lydia in the park hired by Graham?"

"Yes. The man was called 'the dog tamer' and was periodically used by Graham. Graham had also asked around to several hoodlums in the downtown area to go after the Earl Ashenbert's fairy doctor. The man who previously helped out in slaying psychic girls, [clairvoyante](#)s, and girls who sees premonitions, but this time he refused or so I was told."

"Which means Graham is definitely one of Prince's men."

Edgar went silent to concentrate for a moment, then asked Raven again.

"And, what is that?"

He asked because he saw Raven holding a can that was bent in one spot.

"It wouldn't stop saying to deliver it to the fairy doctor."

"Who?"

"This."

He didn't understand what he meant, but Raven didn't appear disturbed and carefully placed it in his coat pocket, so Edgar thought he didn't have to worry about it.

"By the way Raven, it seems like we're going to have to change our plans at this rate."

".....Yes. I thought there was nothing to worry about once she had returned home so this is unexpected. And it seemed like Miss Carlton was reframing from going out alone ever since the attack at the park."

She left the house because she wasn't going to be alone. He didn't know what Rosalie did to lure her out, but she apparently called Lydia out without going through the housekeeper of the Carlton house.

If she went to get the stone she dropped then she should have just knocked the door normally. If there was something she had against Lydia and it was right to think that she called Lydia out, then Rosalie must have thought bitterly of Lydia than Edgar had thought.

Edgar had already investigated that Graham was suspicious in the incident regarding Doris, and he got close with Rosalie just because that was more convenient in getting good information, but he regretted that he didn't pay more attention in her actions.

"I forgotten that you shouldn't think like you knew everything about women."

"That isn't like you."

Indeed, he mumbled, and Edgar got into his carriage.



The letter that the Worpole family's maid was secretly asked to take to Rosalie's room was from Edgar.

It only said that he wanted to see her, which made the young girl in high spirits, and departed alone to go to the famous hotel that was used by the people of

the ton.

It was usually used by the nobles to stay long periods of time as they lived in the countryside and didn't have a residence in London, otherwise, it was a respectable hotel that many of the ton members stayed at like their hiding place.

The room that Rosalie was lead to was a guestroom that was furnished with completely composed, unobtrusive furniture.

The blond haired Earl met to greet her. She felt victorious at his smile.

"I was surprised that you suddenly wanted to see me."

"Why? You knew that I was completely enamored of you?"

When she was gazed down by his forlorn, doleful ash mauve eyes, her heart beaded rapidly.

"But it hasn't been that long since we parted."

"It's been several hours. And besides, I wanted to talk with you more in private."

It was just like the fairy said. As long as she listened to it, the happiness she was expecting came.

She gave herself up to the appealing whispers of his and took a sip of the wine he offered her, which all made Rosalie feel great.

That girl named Lydia, she was such a liar for saying that Edgar was dangerous.

Even if a man was a little dangerous, they would turn loyal in front of a charming lady.

"Actually there was something that I wanted to give you."

"Oh, I wonder what?"

Opening a velvet case he took out, there was a ruby necklace inside.

"Oh, my, this is for me? Could I accept such an expensive gift."

"Do you like it?"

"Yes, of course."

"Then please tell me where Lydia is."

She thought she misheard him. Because Edgar was still looking at Rosalie with gentle eyes like he was in love with her.

"....What did you say?"

"You know, right? Where Lydia is. I thought she may still be with you, but the maid at the baron house said that you returned home alone quite some time ago. But Lydia remains missing ever since she has met you."

Blood immediately rushed to her head. Rosalie felt like she was insulted and threw down the necklace.

"How dare you, I don't know anything about Miss Carlton! And I won't accept this!"

"It's not me to return it to. That's a present from Lord Graham to you."

"From Uncle.....?"

That didn't make any sense.

Edgar made a little chuckle and in that little second he appeared like a completely different man to Rosalie's eyes.

It was a chilling, inhuman smile that she never saw before.

"Did you know that this hotel's owner was Lord Graham? But he had a terribly large debt, that was built up from his excessive spending and the gambles he lost to, but this was also secured as his mortgage. So, I seized this place just now as I was his creditor and this room was used by Lord Graham and so it has his things still in it, but how interesting, there were so many interesting things that you couldn't dare leave laying around in your house."

For example, said Edgar as he stood up and held out a group of papers. Rosalie, who was in a complete chaos, wasn't able to accept them strongly, so the wad of papers all fell to the floor.

"He had been using the fortune that was suppose to be Lady Doris'. Of course, you were also a victim of that. However he started to not be able to make up for the damage. So what was he going to do? He thought. First, he had Lady Doris go missing. You were wanting to make her do as you said and there were many who knew that you were unilaterally doing mean things to her. That was it. Your flamboyant and vain personality where you would supply ample money to men you took a liking to but didn't realize that you were being an easy mark for your money, would become a key part of the plan. Lord Graham had already driven away several men in the past to stop you from throwing out all the family's savings. Luckily, you were quick to fall for them but also quick to be

bored of them and so you were quick to forget about the men you financed. But he used that against you and made it look like you had gotten your hands on Lady Doris' savings. And when you also went missing, society would figure that you got rid of Doris and couldn't hide that and went on an escape."

On a number of the paperwork that were scattered by her feet, she saw that they were signed as if in her handwriting to make it appear like Rosalie had been the one that was doing the expensive shopping. Even the ruby necklace must have been made to look like she bought it.

"Now I went this far and let you know of your dangerous situation. I'd really like it if you'd answered my question."

While in her disoriented state of mind, she was vaguely able to understand the actions of her uncle, but Rosalie was more terrified of Edgar in front of her.

Who in the world is this man?

She thought he was the kind, gentle, breathtakingly handsome earl, but now his perfectly sculptured face appeared chilling cold.

She backed away to tried to run but he grabbed ahold of Rosalie's arm.



"I...I'll scream."

"Go ahead as much as you like. There are no other guests on this floor and I

already had a word with the manager. To not pay attention even if they heard the sound of a screaming woman."

"Where's Lydia?", he pressed on.

"If something were to happen to me....you'll never be able to find her..."

"Is that so."

A second after those words had left his mouth, he turned his head and called for someone.

"Open the window."

For the first time, Rosalie realized that there was an auburn-skinned servant standing in the corner of the room.

Edgar dragged her to the windowsill.

"No, STOP! What are you doing?!"

"If you don't intend to talk, then it wouldn't be any different to me if something were to happen to you."

Without any hesitation, he grabbed Rosalie's neck. He pushed her further out the window as she lost her breath from suffocation.

"Intoxicated by the wine and on a spree fell out the window, is what they'd think."

I'm going to be killed. Rosalie sensed his seriousness and lost control of herself and cried and screamed for her life. Most likely she must have spilled the truth about Lydia as she was crying.

When the suffocation stopped and she came to her senses, she was sitting on the floor. She couldn't stop from sobbing convulsively and her body wouldn't stop trembling.

And yet, she felt an overpowering drowsiness come over her, there must have been something put in the wine.

"Young naïve little lady. You should learn that you're able to dream like the world revolves around you because of your blind ignorance."

He swiftly put on his overcoat and was about to leave the room with his servant.

"Oh, yes, the wine you had was also from this room. Although I don't know what was in it."

No. I'm scared. If I lose consciousness here, then Uncle would come....

But the blond devil walked out of the room, leaving Rosalie alone.

For some reason, the memory of the blond young boy who she mercilessly abandoned, just like this, came to mind.

Chapter 5 - Feelings beyond the glass

Inside the rolled bottle, Lydia screamed as she went tumbling. It hit the wall, making the bottle stop, but her back was thrown viciously hard against it.

“Ow....., ooh, what have you done! You little midget! Baldy! Fatso!”

She reviled at the bogey beast who was playing around with the bottle, but even if it was criticized, it only held its stomach in laughter.

However, Lydia wasn't really in pain. Only her soul was trapped in the bottle, which only felt like her body was shrunken down and put in the bottle, but that was only according to Lydia's imagination.

She only imagined that she was rolling around inside the bottle and that she hit her head.

Even if she knew that, it still felt like it hurt.

The bogey beast shriveled its body down to the same size as Lydia and made a little dance outside the bottle.

(What a stupid fairy doctor. It's because you tried to capture me that you're in that state!)

She was aware of the possibility. If you try to capture a fairy, you're stepping into their world. When she did, Lydia herself would be under the control of the same rules as them.

She had put herself in danger like the bogey beast of the possibility of being sealed in by just one strand of her hair.

(Now, what should I do with you. Should I throw you into the river like that?)

She couldn't help but be intimidated by its words. If that were to happen, she would end up floating around forever in who knows where of the vast ocean. Just then, the bogey beast let out a yell.

In front of Lydia, it was squashed by some sort of thin and tall thing covered in fur.

She pushed herself against the bottle wall and looked up to see a giant gray-haired cat pressing down on the bogey beast with its foot and grinning

satisfactorily.

“Nico!”

“What are you doing, Lydia . Were you tricked by this thing’s magic?”

Nico stomped down onto the bogey beast several more times and kicked it away, throwing it into the air and smacked against the wall and disappeared in a puff of dust. It had only lost consciousness and was sure to wake up after some time, but it wouldn’t be able to return to normal for a while.

At least that irritating creature was gone and Lydia could finally relax.

“I came to rescue you.”

“Nico, I bet you were watching me being bullied around from the window till now.”

She figured that out by his tail that was dangling down. And yet however much she waited he didn’t come out to do something and she was about to lost her patience with him.

Nico combed his whiskers for no reason and fixed his necktie. He was thinking of an excuse.

“Just for your information, I was waiting for the best opportunity.”

So he judged that since the bogey beast had shranked down, he would be able to drive it away.

“Oh, well, then. ...Thank you.”

Still, Lydia was grateful for him for finding her.

“How did you find me?”

“The hobgoblin at the Carlton house was looking out for you as thanks for the biscuits. Since the bogey beast appeared at the house, it was worried and followed after you.”

“I see, those biscuits of mothers really please the fairies.”

“So, what happened to your real body. Where is it?”

“It was carried off somewhere, I don’t know.”

Just moments after Lydia was capped inside the bottle, several number of men opened and came inside the warehouse.

One of them was Lord Graham and he had apparently came to take away Doris . He found Doris who was frantically trying to wake up Lydia , and he looked

surprised and puzzled at the sudden appearance of a girl who shouldn't have been there, but after he made sure there was no one else, he tied up Doris and had her carried out.

He apparently had put them on a small boat on the riverbank just outside as she could hear the sound of the water and the creaking of the wooden boat.

Lydia had been watching from inside the bottle as Graham peered down at her lifeless body.

「Is it a corpse?」 asked one of Graham's men.

How rude, thought Lydia .

「No, it looks like she's only sleeping. But, why, isn't this girl the fairy doctor that was with the Earl Ashenbert.」

「What's a fairy doctor?」

「I'm not all that sure, but I think they're something like a psychic or fortune-teller. They apparently have some sort mysterious power.」

Lydia fought down the urge to say he was wrong and continued to watch what they were doing.

「I remembered something, Sir, some days ago, didn't you hire that "dog tamer"? To go kidnap a fairy doctor girl.」

What? 'Dog tamer'? So the man who appeared at the foggy park on that day....

「Yes, but that man was killed. The word spread that there's an excellent guardsman under the earl, so all the hoodlums who accepted the kidnapping jobs up till now are all scared away, so I was just looking for a new man for the job.」

「She looks like an average girl to me. Can she really be sold for a high price?」

「If it's a human with extraordinary powers, that man would pay any price. And this girl has the title as the privately hired by the earl family. She's sure to have some kind of power. She's the perfect catch for us to get a large sum of money at once.」

It looks like they are going to sell her off to someone.

Oh, lord, she panicked, but there was nothing Lydia could do as she was inside a bottle.

「To just ship stolen or smuggled goods like that man orders is too much risk and

not enough profit.

「Children of the poor won't sell for a high price. All the humans with extraordinary powers I've sold up till now didn't have that amazing an ability and he wasn't pleased, so I want to get back his favor around now.」

「So, if this girl was favorable, then it would be all the more convenient.」

「Doris was saying something like Rosalie was jealous of this girl and had locked her in. Then as long as we silence Rosalie, it would mean no one who know of the whereabouts of this girl.」

Oh, no, stop it, don't touch my body!

Even though Lydia wished that, she could only watch as her body was carried out.

“Now I understand” mumbled Nico who crossed his arms after he heard her account.

“So, that Graham guy is trying to sell you off. Who was Graham talking about when he said ‘He’?”

“How would I know,” replied Lydia , but as she said that, she started to have a bad feeling.

Eight years ago, Edgar was brought here to be sold off. So, in other words, Graham was linked with the one who made Edgar into a slave. Most likely, Graham prepares white slaves, not only Edgar, to a certain someone.

What if Lydia was also going to be sold off to this 「Prince.」

“What'll I do, Nico.....”

“Shh.”

Nico picked up the bottle Lydia was in and hid in shadows. Since there was the noise of the front door opening.

Someone entered the warehouse along with the thick fog seeping in. Footsteps echoed through the warehouse.

The light of a lantern was being used to carefully inspect inside and a shadow came to the back of the building.

“It looks like there's no one here.”

“We were too late.”

It was Edgar's voice. He was with Raven.

She wondered if they came to look for her.

But in the state she was in, she couldn't go out into the open.

Lydia peeked out of the shadows along with Nico.

"Do you think Sir Graham had already come."

"Raven, there's a hankerchief."

Raven went to pick it up.

"It has the initials D.W. embroidered into it."

"Doris Worpole?This warehouse apparently belongs to Graham, but that would mean Lady Doris was also locked up in here?"

Hold on a moment, thought Lydia. They brought up Graham's name like it came to no surprise to them. Had they known that Doris was being confined by her uncle?

Since when? And if they knew, why did they get Lydia involved by even going through the trouble up bringing up the fairy?

"Then, do you think Miss Carlton was also taken along with the baron daughter?" "There is that possibility."

Edgar fell silent, he must be thinking of something, as he combed his blond hair up that stood out even in this darkness. He wore an overcoat and leaned this thin by muscular body against an old, dirty pillar and mumbled in a seriously troubled tone.

"If she's handed over to Prince, there's nothing we can do. Before the ship leaves port, we need to get her back at the London docks."

Prince?

Was "He" who Graham was talking about really referring to "Prince?" If Edgar even knew about that, then it means.....

Now Lydia was seriously having a very, very bad feeling.

"I shouldn't have made Lydia a bait."

Bait?

"But Lord Edgar, it was inevitable in this situation. Even if Graham didn't know that Miss Carlton did have a special ability, if she was here with Lady Doris, then she was bound to be taken away."

"You're right, but if he knew about her, then that would mean they would lock her up securely to make sure they can sell her off to Prince."

"What is the meaning of me being a bait! Edgar, are you saying that you were planning on having me be kidnapped by Lord Graham?" shouted Lydia , not able to stop herself.

"Lydia ?"

"Impossible, there's no space where a person could hide...."

Just as Raven said, Edgar peered into the crack that no human could possibly squeeze into and saw there was a gray-haired cat who was holding a glass bottle.

"Nico? That voice....couldn't have been you."

"What are you going to do, Lydia ,” whispered Nico, and started to walk out.

"It's useless to hide now, so I'll just explain. Besides, it looks like they can hear me."

I wonder if they'll believe you, said Nico irresponsibly, as he walked out into the open on his two back legs to stand in front of Edgar and held up the bottle over his head.

"First of all, Edgar, I'm going to have you explain yourself! What's the meaning of bait!"

He looked down at the bottle that was the source of Lydia 's voice, and frowned as he winked over and over again.

"Raven, can you see something?" he asked and turned towards Raven.

"Yes."

"Why are you surprised when you can see?"

"I've seen extraordinary things in the past periodically."

"Excuse me, but I'm not extraordinary."

"If you would permit me, Lord Edgar, I can explain what is inside the bottle."

"Then tell me. Only a tiny figure of Lydia appears in my eyes?"

"I believe that you are more or less not mistaken."

"What do you mean more or less! Stop doing a short comedy together!"

"Lydia , how in the world did you get in that state?"

Edgar picked up the bottle with his hand and looked completely amazed as he

was about to pop open the cork.

"Ahh, don't, stop! If you open the cork I'll die!"

"Huh? Why?"

"Because my body isn't here. Lord Graham took it away. If you release my soul when my body isn't near, then my soul wouldn't have anything to return to and disappear."

He threw his hand off the lid.

"Which means, we'll need to get back your body and return your soul that's in this bottle back to your body."

Lydia nodded.

"Lord Edgar. If that's the case, then it's best to get into action immediately."

"You're right. Raven, go back to the hotel and keep an eye on Graham. The news about his assets being claimed would reach his ears soon. When he finds Rosalie in that room, he's sure to put her on the same ship and Doris and Lydia. We'll determine which boat it is he's using for human trafficking from that."

"Yes, my lord."

"Rosalie...., what happened to her? Hey, did you do something to her?"

But Edgar continued to ignore Lydia's voice.

"And use every possible means to put pressure on all the ships he owns so they won't leave port."

At the earl residence, on top of a table lit by a lamp, Lydia sat in a sour silent.

"Are you mad?"

Edgar was sitting on a beautiful ebony chair and was looking at her with a trouble and embarrassed look but Lydia remained sitting down holding onto her knees and looking the other way.

How could she not be angry after she was told the truth.

Edgar was using Lydia from the beginning for his revenge against the man who handed him over to Prince.

He was aware that Graham was the cause of Lady Doris' disappearance and the possibility that Lydia might be targeted, and yet he made it so that Lydia would purposefully get the attention of Graham.

He says that he knew that Graham had his hand in selling stolen goods and

human trafficking, but if he was the one who was trading with Prince then he anticipated that Graham would think that the special ability of a fairy doctor could be sold for a handsome price.

Having her meet Graham at Cremorne Gardens was also part of his calculations. And Rosalie's affections towards him would be handy so he used that for his revenge as well.

The reason Edgar came to that warehouse was apparently because he was told by Rosalie of Lydia's location. But it didn't seem like Rosalie would tell him that honestly as Edgar was keeping that part quite vague.

She could only judge from fragments of his confession that he anticipated that Graham was going to sell Rosalie off as well, and Lydia could only imagine that he abandoned her in a dangerous location, but even that was quite heartless and cruel.

To act that kind and fond of her, only to turn out that he was using her. What does he think of people? He really is the worst kind of person.

Even though he says that he isn't lying or he isn't hiding anything, he's really deceiving people. The reason he tricks others with his sweet talk is so that he can deceive them like he pleases.

This wasn't like it was her first time being tricked, but that made it all the more made Lydia feel miserable about letting her soft self go and believe in him just a little.

"I had no intention of getting you in danger. I had planned on not allowing any of his men lay a finger on you."

"I don't want to hear excuses."

She shot back harshly, which made him go quiet.

Lydia felt starved and that made her feel even more depressed.

Of course, since her body that was still asleep hadn't even eaten dinner.

"Are you cold?"

Lydia realized that she was rubbing her shoulders like she was cradling herself.

"Maybe..... I should have at least put on a shawl."

"Do you want to go near the hearth?"

"I think that's pointless."

"Yes, I guess so."

Giving it a little thought, Edgar softly picked up the bottle with Lydia with both hands.

"I wonder if all human souls are miniature form of themselves."

"Who knows. But this appearance is only because I can imagine myself like this. I wish I could have appeared more attractive."

"You're beautiful enough, Lydia ."

"Even if you try to coax me, I'm still angry at you.Hey, what are you doing."

He wrapped his arms like an embrace around the bottle with Lydia in it.

"I thought you would feel warm this way."

"Didn't I say it's pointless? My body is probably lying somewhere cold and dark."

As she said that, Lydia realized that Edgar went through that kind of frightening experience.

At least she wasn't experiencing solitude, or fear, or despair, but it was still horrifying to imagine that she was still being trapped in some dark storehouse or somewhere unknown.

Even in the short period of time she was locked up by Rosalie, she was desperate in trying to calm herself down, but she really was extremely scared that she wanted to cry out loud.

"It's just a little while longer. You're going to be saved no matter what."

She wasn't able to look up at his expression, but his voice sounded serious. His voice sounded like he was holding down his emotions and spoke the words like he was swearing an oath, and that must have been similar with his swear for revenge.

She watched his slender fingers stroke the glass and that gave Lydia the sensation like she was being directly stroked.

She should have been resenting Edgar, but she was imagining herself relax from her head being padded like a child.

She felt sure that he was doing his best to rescue Lydia .

He was a man who was merciless against his enemies and used others with his glibly smart talk. But he was a man who would protect his allies even at the cost

of himself.

However, Lydia was in a fairly indefinite position.

She was unrelated to him enough to be used, but an ally enough to be protected.

But she guessed that couldn't be helped. The comrades he considered his family were the ones who went through the same suffering trials as him and the ones who experienced the same world where there was no justice or beauty.

And now there was only Raven left.

When she looked back, she remembered how it didn't hurt to know that she was used as bait but it was more tearful when she learned of Edgar's state of mind.

"Hey, for your revenge, what were you planning to do with Lord Graham?"

He replied "Let's see, I don't know" and evaded her question probably because he was thinking of something that was a little too beyond her imagination.

"Is revenge the only way? Do you believe that's the only thing you could do for your friends that had all died?"

"What else is there that I can do?"

"You asked me to help save the boy who was taken and disappeared into the fog."

"That was...., I was being too sentimental. Even a fairy doctor wouldn't be able to save the dead, right?"



"Yes. But you are alive. That story wasn't just about one boy, was it? I heard from Raven that there were many other boys who went through the same thing. You were also talking about yourself, weren't you?"

"Well, I'm not sure."

She could sense in his careless response, there was a hint of irritation. It was like he felt hatred towards himself for being the only one to survive.

"Isn't it you that really needs to be saved?"

He didn't answer.

"You yourself are still trapped in the fog. That's why you're not able to accept the fact that your friends were sacrificed... But, even if you paid your revenge against Lord Graham, I don't think that will make you relieved from your grief." Lydia felt the small breath from Edgar's sigh. Although she didn't know what sort of meaning there was behind it.

"It isn't bad having you this small. I can always keep you near me."

"What, I don't want to stay like this! I'm hungry and it's cold, and what should I do when I get sick!"

She couldn't say that Edgar wouldn't keep Lydia like this as a pet. So Lydia seriously denied his idea.

"I'm just kidding. I'd rather prefer to embrace your warm real body instead of a

cold glass bottle. I want to touch you so I can make sure of your warmth. But if I were to do that, I was just thinking that you in your real body would sure to slap me and run off."

Of course I would.

But Lydia was feeling just a little that it would better that she was a small version of herself in a bottle for now.

Then she wouldn't have been able to be beside Edgar after finding out about the lie that she was used as a lure.

There wouldn't have been an opportunity to touch the despair or lament that he was carrying like this.

Lydia had a feeling like Edgar might be shedding tears as he was holding the glass bottle for a while.

He was grieving quietly in his heart of how he could only exact revenge for his dead comrades.

She thought of him as the arrogant and overconfident and the type who would die than show the weak side of himself. Even if he looked sad or depressed, he was the type of person who even calculated that and threw Lydia around.

Even now, she didn't know what he was really thinking. And yet, she felt glad that she was at a close enough to exchange words with him who maybe wanted to cry.

Perhaps what Raven had told her was stuck in her mind.

That Edgar was a person who didn't lean against anyone and stood alone. Because Lydia had no ties, she was probably able to peek into Edgar's whimpers and sorrows that he had to lock up in order to fight, but Raven must have really wanted to say to please not hate the weak part of him.

She must have really have a soft-heart to not hate him even when she was in a dangerous situation. But.

Edgar needed her even though Lydia made the foolish mistake as a fairy doctor by being bottled up by a bogey beast, but Edgar still needed her, and if there was any salvation by being by his side like this, then she was honestly happy.

Through the glass, she pressed her cheek against his shirt. It was something she couldn't never do in her real body.

Amazingly, she felt like she could feel his warmth seep through to her.

Who knew that you would get sleepy even as just a soul.

When she woke up, Lydia was inside the bottle as the morning sun came shining down.

For some strange reason, the bottle Lydia was in was wrapped around with cushions and sheets. He should know that it's useless, and yet he went through the trouble for such a meaningless thing.

Lydia felt it was absurd and yet dimly heartwarming and as she had been laying on her side at the bottom of the bottle and was about to wake up, but then, she realized that something was wrong.

Her body was heavy as a rock and couldn't move.

Of course it wasn't her real body, but it felt like it was made out of lead, and she was barely able to lift up her upper body. Lydia leaned up against the glass wall and fought back the pounding pain in her head and the whirl of her brain.

She was filled with the fear of unexpectedly vanishing. Since it was a very delicate condition for a human to remain as just a soul, there must have been something happening to herself.

She looked around to search the room, but there was no one in Lydia's field of vision.

"Edgar,where are you?"

"Oi, now, what happened? You sure are relying him."

A gray-haired cat snooped down in front of her.

"Nico."

Last night, Nico had returned to her house. To explain to her father and camouflage that Lydia had been forced to go to the party of an acquaintance and had gotten drunk and took the offer to stay at the residence. She didn't want to cause her father to worry, and she definitely couldn't show herself in this state.

"Even if it was the great earl, there was no way he could fool around with you when you have no body."

"Stop saying nonsense.I just felt a little sick and didn't know what to do...."

"Sick? Lydia, that's a major problem."

Nico crossed his front arms in a serious manner.

“What’s a problem?”

The one who entered the room was Edgar. He noticed Lydia who was sitting slumped down at the bottom of the bottle and peered down at her with a worried look.

“What is the matter, Lydia?”

Nico answered in her place as she had no idea.

“Humans can’t live as just their souls. If they are separated with their bodies for a long period of time and even though they are sealed in the bottle by the fairy’s magic, they slowly lose their life energy.”

“What? Then we need to hurry.”

Perhaps to do being in a frantic state, Edgar hadn’t realized that he was having a conversation with Nico.

“So, did you find out where that Graham guy is holding Lydia captive?”

“It isn’t like Lydia’s body was seen carried onto it, but I have a rough idea of which ship. The only problem is that since his shipping business is half financed by the Baron Worpole family, I won’t be able to seize it....”

“Ahhh, sorry but we have no time for discussing the mechanics of human affairs. Just say it in a nutshell.”

“In other words, it would be difficult to forcedly stop the ship or inspect inside.”

“Huh? Aren’t you a former criminal? Just use a bloody weapons and attack it and hijack it.”

“It seems like you have the misconception, but I don’t use those sort of vulgar methods.”

“There isn’t any vulgarity or propriety in being a thief!”

“Umm....., if we explained to the police about Lord Graham’s crimes....”

Lydia gave a proposal, but that would take too much time, said Edgar.

She didn’t know how long she could last, but she had the feeling like she couldn’t make it through the day. If they went against someone respectable like Lord Graham who had a high social standing, then they would need to collect reliable evidence and even the police wouldn’t go straight into action.

“Then, lord earl, think of some way that wouldn’t take time.”

The time Edgar was thinking of something was just a short while.

"All right, I'll use the last resort."

"If you had that kind of resort then you shouldn't have kept it stored."

"I'll have to think as I go in order to know if we can really use it, though."

He called for his butler and announced his departure. He scribbled something on a memo and handed it to the servant.

"And, Tomkins, send a word out to Raven to come to this place."

Lydia witnessed Edgar hiding a pistol in the inside of his frockcoat, and she took a strenuous long breathe.

The deep breath she drawed was from the suffocation she was feeling and Edgar's dawning decision that came from that.

She wondered if he always had to take the responsibility and make the decisions like this.

He might have made the decision that decided someone's life or death alone and had to make things turn to the most best outcome.

"Lydia, hang on. I'll definitely save you."

The side of his face that showed through the glass bottle looked like a knight that was heading out to the battle field and she saw the light of fire that was shining in his ash mauve eyes.

There was no guarantee that it could end with the best outcome. In reality he had lost many of his comrades.

There must have been so many times when it didn't end like he said. And yet, the part of him that had the determination to take the lead was making him say that.

He had the determination and resolve to confidently say a promise that might be a lie.

Beautiful eye colors, and a beautiful person.

It was a different attractiveness that would capture the hearts of the ladies, and different from a superficial carefulness or cajolement; she thought see saw the strength that grabbed the depths of people's heart in him in just a flash of a moment.

A nobleman from his core. A merciless criminal. A frivolous lady's man. A

charismatic leader.

Who are you really?

Which is the real Edgar?

I don't know anything about the real you. Why are you being so desperate for someone like me?

"I want to ask....., is there a chance for this to succeed?" asked Lydia as she fought against her suffocation in the carriage.

"Of course," replied Edgar immediately.

".....You're lying."

"You don't have to worry, leave everything to me."

That's a lie too. You don't have any certainty and yet you don't say anything that would make the ones following you nervous.

"Even if you say something like that, there's still times that you'd fail, right?"

"Lydia, you're losing your courage."

"I...., don't trust you enough to leave it in your hands confidently. Even if I do come out alive, I'm not going to give you your thanks. ...Because it is your fault for turning out this way."

"Do you think me as a criminal who would leave you to die after you say that of me?"

"....I wouldn't know. I don't know anything about you. ...Because I'm not a part of your team, aren't you thinking of abandoning men when it turns to the worst? It's fine to abandon me. The thing I don't want the most...., the thing I'm unwilling to accept is after you fail, for you to feel regret and suffer because of it. I don't want to be half-heartingly pitied by you when you were the one who exploited me. I don't want to become one of your scars. I refuse to be that kind of luggage."

For a brief moment, Edgar tilted his head to the side but then burst out in a chuckling laughter like he was delightfully amused.

"Thank you, Lydia. I feel a little easier now."

".....No, you're wrong, I really, meant when I said I hate you....!"

That was a lie.

I don't want you to shoulder everything by yourself.

It looked like Edgar understood what she really wanted to say and that she couldn't say what she meant.

"But, you know, I can't let you go free. Don't you feel like by partnering up together we would have the fairy's luck be on our side?"

I wouldn't know. I'm just put through so much unlucky things because of you. And yet, perhaps she was fortunate to have someone who understood the duty of a fairy doctor appear before her.

"So, Lydia, please don't give up your hope in me. Don't give up and let's fight together."

What a strange man. He has no idea how much I am disappointed in your ways. But although Lydia did feel the anger of being used as bait, she hadn't felt pain or was scared because of it.

Eventually, the carriage approached the road that Lord Graham's office resided. Edgar had the carriage stopped just a few buildings away from it and waited for Raven to arrive, and Lydia watched as the two of them were discussing something together, and after he came back in, he picked up the bottle that Lydia was in and got off the carriage.

Nico followed after them.

He entered the office, and before Edgar, who asked to see the one in charge, a man who claimed to be president appeared.

"You're out of the question. Bring me Lord Graham."

"Pardon me, but I am the one in charge of here. If you have any business, I would be glad to hear it."

"Are you making light of me because you think me as an amateur?"

Edgar stared back at the plump middle-aged man who was giving him the attitude like he was taking care of a troublesome peer with a condescending glare that completely intimidated the man.

"Oh, not so ever. It's just the owner hardly ever comes to this place. I'm sorry, but sir...."

"Tell him Earl Ashenbert is here."

"Pardon me, my lord."

"If he doesn't come quickly, he's surely going to regret it."

“....And you mean by?”

“I’m saying that I’m aware of what the packages are you people are delivering.”

The man escorted Edgar into a different room in a completely panicked state.

Seeing how Lord Graham had arrived in such a short time, it was easy to guess that it was a lie that he wasn’t here.

The bonds of the banks and casinos that Graham had debts to were all completely bought by Edgar. Because of Edgar who immediately collected those places whose payment returns were left unpaid, Graham was trying to get back his fortunes.

But because Edgar had many different alias, Graham wasn’t able to immediately determine who it was that was trying to corner him on a cliff and for what purpose.

Still, of course, Graham was sure to be struggling to stop even just a little from being completely robed, and Edgar must have foreseen that he would use this shipping company as his hideout, and paid a visit expecting that he would be here.

“Why, if it isn’t my lord, I was told you needed to see me, what can I do for you.”

Graham came into the reception room, and had a look like nothing was the matter, but one could tell at one glance that he was completely exhausted.

“There is actually a lot that I would like to say, but since I’m in quite a hurry, I’ll go ahead at the risk of being rude and ask you. I’d like the return of my fairy doctor.”

It was quite the direct approach. Lydia watched as she worried if everything would be alright, and made caution to their conversation, but her listlessness was only growing. She was barely able to grasp the situation, and didn’t have the strength to give her opinion, but either way, she was left to leave everything up to Edgar.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about. Did my niece take the liberty and did something to displease you for me to be thrown accusations about shipping ‘certain things’?”

“I’m here to talk business. Are you not interested?”

Edgar had his arms crossed with an attitude of arrogant superiority. The reason Graham hadn't sat down was obviously because he wanted to hurry up and kick his guest out the door and Edgar kept going on regardless.

"I'm saying that I will buy from you."

"And what would that be?"

"Of course, my fairy doctor."

"Like I had mentioned, I don't know what you're talking about. In the first place, my lord, if this is about the young lady who is hired as your private fairy doctor, then it would be absurd to talk about selling and buying. If I were to sell such a thing, it would be a crime."

"Like I had already said, I am in a hurry. This is the most important reason why I am bargaining with you. Under these circumstances, I don't care about this being absurd or being a crime. Even if someone had stolen my jewel and was making a profit off of that by selling it, I plan to pay a suitable price to get back my jewel."

"What you're saying is quite interesting. However, unfortunately, I don't have any idea in regards to where such a jewel might be...."

Most likely, Graham needed to get his hands on a large sum of money as soon as possible, and although he was being cautious, he didn't look like he was going to slap away Edgar's offer. He only replied with vague responses.

"So that means, you don't have my jewel with you. However, Lord Graham, you must have many connections in the jewelry business. I would appreciate it if you would introduce me to anyone."

"Hmm, well.Let's see."

He was still hiding and started to show signs like he was thinking about it.

"There are periodically cases where one would arrange rare things of great value for something they are familiar with. But it isn't an easy task, and there are times when one must cross a dangerous bridge, and even if you are lucky to find the thing you are looking for, you would have to cross an unlawful path," said Graham.

"I see," said Edgar unconcerned and pressed Graham to continue on.

"First of all, since you would be trading with those who broke the law, one of

the conditions would be to keep it strictly confidential.”

Uh-huh, right, when you’re the one breaking the law.

“Of course I understand. They are bound to be in a collusive relationship with those in power. And even if you were to file a suit against them, and I am aware of the fact that there wouldn’t be anything good to come out of that, and so I am asking to bargain with you,” said Edgar.

“Then, just one more thing. Forgive me for asking, my lord, but will you mind covering the expenses?”

He was the kidnapper and yet he has the nerve to ask for a large amount of money. Lydia was so furious that she nearly forgot her ill state, but unfortunately she didn’t have the energy to deliver a protest.

“What is your request?” asked Edgar.

The price Graham asked for was an unreasonably high price. At least, Lydia couldn’t imagine what a person could buy in their lifetime to use up that much money.

“I will pay as long as you escort me to where Lydia is being kept.”

Eh? Edgar....., I can’t believe you are willing to pay such a price in my exchange. It would take longer than her lifetime to repay such money.

“That....would be difficult. I would have to ask you to wait here.”

“I have no time to spare. In the cast I wait here, and it turns out to be too late, then I will not pay a cent.”

“Too late?”

“Lydia has an illness. She should be asleep and unable to wake up, so if we leave her in that state, it will be too late.”

“.....I see, so that’s why you’re in a hurry. Which will be a problem. If in the case I escort you and it turns out to be too late?”

Aside from Lydia’s panic, the trade was strangely being continued in a calm manner.

“In that case, then it wouldn’t be at your fault. I will pay.”

The reason Edgar said that was because they needed to return Lydia’s soul that was in the bottle to her body as soon as possible.

But to escort Edgar to the location where he hid the girl he slayed would be

lowering his self defenses and he wouldn't want that to happen. However, in order to make this trade final, he had to do it.

At any rate, Graham weighed the fact that he desperately needed a large amount of money and the risk to get that against each other, and in the end, he chose the money.

Lydia listened to the sound of the feather pen Edgar held as he signed the contract and grew tears of lament were building up in her.

Why, would he do such much for me, I don't understand.

Even if Lydia was gone, if he were to search all of England then there still were a number of fairy doctors left.

Using his money for that would be much more economical and have no danger.

And it was questionable if there really was a need for a fairy doctor for the earl.

"My lord, the only one I can escort can be you alone. I would like to ask for your valet to wait here."

Oh, no, we can't take Raven. More than Lydia imagined, it looked like Edgar had put himself in a dangerous trade and she panicked.

For Edgar to go alone to the place that Lydia's body was being confided and Graham planned to do something with Edgar, than it would be an easy task.

"Fine. I don't have any time to waste."

And yet, Edgar held Lydia in the bottle with so much gentleness and going along with what Graham was saying.

"Please leave your weapon here as well."

Edgar obediently took out the pistol from inside his frock coat and placed it on the table.

"By the way, what is that bottle?"

"It's just an empty bottle."

Edgar only said that reply with a thin smile on his face. Graham apparently couldn't see Lydia and made a puzzled face but he must have felt there was no necessity to press any further.

Edgar was such an odd man. He wasn't able to see fairies and had a very realistic and pragmatical view of the world, and accepted the spirit inside Raven and didn't have any doubt in Lydia and her ability.

He didn't think that Nico could talk, and yet he understood what Nico said. Even to Lydia, he would do inconsiderate things like he was unconcerned, by at times, more than anyone else, he would understand her. Just like Lydia, who was determined not to die like this, he too, was frantically trying to prevent her death.

For the present time, he was a gentleman who was kind to the ladies. His kindness could just be an extra act to that. And yet, for her who was being used as bait, she would have the misconception of being treated with great care by him like a princess.

Even if it was just her imagination, Lydia desperately struggled to stay awake for Edgar's sake, because she felt that if she loses consciousness her soul would fade away.

If that happened, she had the silly high opinion that Edgar would have to carry another scar.

Seen off by Raven, Edgar got onto the carriage with Graham. Lydia felt the presence of Nico, who was following them with his body remaining invisible, and heard 'it's just a little longer, hold on' said by Edgar who had encouraged her in a whisper.

Chapter 6 - His merciless revenge

It was the entrance to Great British Empire. The port where people and shipments gathered from all over the world was filled with ships that went up and down the Thames River.

With the weather being cloudy and there being no wind, the built up smog that filled the Greater London looked as if there was a black giant was stood shrouding over the city. It endlessly swallowed up the immense wealth that was built by the colonial settlements. Passing by red brick warehouses and carriages used for transporting and the piled-up cargo, Lydia used the time to imagine that she could see a huge giant form of a fogman that used its fog to swallow up the city.

Eventually, their carriage stopped by a wharf. From there, they got onto a boat to oar across the surface of the river and swerved through a number of ships that were docked there.

And then, Graham had Edgar taken to one of those vessels which was a large sailing ship.

When they got on, he was surrounded by a large group of tall, muscular men who all eyed him with hostility, which made it feel like they were surrounded by a pack of wolves.

However, Edgar didn't change his expression at all. Instead, he glared back at them with an irritated look, which made the wolves sense the presence of a lion inside the slender young man and made them shrink away.

It was a different impression than when he showed himself courtly and sagacious to high-class people like Graham to shut them up, but more like they saw an instinctive presence in front of them, which made Lydia go back to a nervous state of mind.

Edgar who was trying to save Lydia; however, he was a man who always had a hidden quality about himself that Lydia wasn't able to see.

And yet, Lydia still wasn't able to hate that dangerous side of Edgar and felt that

she would forgive him even if she was put through danger.

She would also see his sorrow and so she couldn't make herself hate him.

And she had a faint feeling about something. That Edgar was plotting something on the other side of his mind under that mask of his.

Even if his motive of coming into the center of enemy territory alone was to save Lydia, he surely wouldn't be planning to leave here with just that.

In the end, whatever impossibly dangerous situation it may be, he would use anything he could,

But, now, Lydia just gave up and thought he should just do as he pleases.

Since however much she is fed up and angry at him, she couldn't bring herself to loath and hate him.

Graham had a few number of men, who didn't look like sailors but more like bodyguards, with him as they went down a dark-lit staircase and through the passageways of the ship.

Eventually, they reached the end and he opened a door to a heavily guarded room and entered it with just Edgar and him.

"So, where is my jewel?"

As Lydia sat limply, she turned red by him who was still saying such ticklishly embarrassing words.

"Beyond that door."

Graham pointed to a door that was at the back of the room.

She was imagining that her body was thrown in some dirty, dark storeroom like place, and so surprised to learn that they kept her in an actual room.

Edgar hurried over to the door. When he tried to turn the knob, it looked like it was locked.

"Where's the key?"

As he asked that, he must of sensed an unusual, prickling presence behind him, and slowly turned around with caution.

Lydia was able to get a glimpse of Graham pointing a pistol towards Edgar.

"Lord Graham, what would that be?" questioned Edgar, who spoke in an indifferent tone, like he had expected this.

"My lord, I'd like it if you didn't underestimate me. I heard that it was you who

was trying to claim all my fortunes using a number of false names.”

“Oh? Do you have evidence of such a thing?”

“Rosalie told me. It was you who seized my hotel, and on top of that, you were secretly sniffing around about me, I hear. What are you after?”

“Rosalie...., I see. So, you loaded up a young woman who went to you pleading for help onto a slave trade ship. Just like you planned from the start, you were going to make it seem like she was the one who used and dried up the Worpole family fortune and disappeared with one of the men she was financing.”

Why, could someone do such a thing just for the sake of money? And to two of his nieces who he was suppose to look after as his ward...

Doris must also be in some dark place right now and crying by herself again. Even the strong-willed Rosalie must surely be frightened.

But, there was nothing Lydia could do. She was fighting against the tormenting sensation like her tiny self was slowly fading away and was at her limits with just staying conscious that she was still breathing.

“Lord Earl, it seems you know too much for your own good. I am going to have you sunken into the Atlantic Ocean. That way your body will definitely not be found.”

With the pistol still aimed at Edgar, Graham placed his finger on the lever.

“Lydia, excuse me.”

Being suddenly apologized to, she didn’t know what he meant, but in that moment, Edgar had already chucked the bottle into the air.

I said it was alright to abandon me. But this!

She expected to be smashed against the wall. But, Lydia was caught by a body of fluffy fur.

“Nico....”

But, she had no time to relax, as her body flinched to the sound of bullet fire. A hanging lamp was shattered. Just when she had looked up to see that, Edgar had made a lung at Graham and was in a scuffle with him to try to take away his weapon.

By mere chance, another bullet was fired.

Sure enough, men who heard the sound came dashing into the room

immediately.

Nico clutched the bottle in his arms and hid under a table.

“Nico, Edgar is going to get killed.”

“What do you say I can do?”

“Well, that’s....but...”

She saw one of the massive, burly men wrapped his solid muscle arms around Edgar’s neck in order to pull him away from Graham.

During that struggle, suddenly, the man’s body bended backwards and his whole body crashed to the floor.

A black shadowy figure crossed swiftly in front of the desk that Lydia and Nico were hiding under. A hand axe sliced through the air and knocked the pistol out of Graham’s hand. The shadow didn’t stop and went on to attack another one of his men.

It was Raven.

When his body, that appeared slender and frail at first glance, would pass by, the tall and heavyset bodyguards would just fall limp to the floor without even letting out a grunt.

On the other hand, Graham snatched up a knife from one of his fallen men and turned to face Edgar who was on his knees about to stand up.

“Lord Edgar!”

Just when Raven was distracted by that, one of Graham’s men jumped onto him from behind.

However, Raven spun around as he swunged his leg around in a semicircular motion to strike the man with the his foot.

The man’s huge body flew back to crash through the door and made a booming sound as he hit the floor.

“Nico, hurry and return Lydia!”

In response to Edgar’s voice, Nico dashed into the room beyond the broken door.

In the room, on a simple bed, Lydia found her body laying on her back.

Nico rushed over to the body and the second he popped open the bottle, Lydia’s mind went blank.

The time that passed, must have been a short one, when the soul and body were melting back into each other.

Lydia heard the noise had died down around her and slowly opened her eyes. She realized that her body moved just as she thought and slightly relaxed in relief and lifted her upper body to sit up.

In the room where the floor was covered with broken parts of the room and Graham's men lay unconscious all over the place, only three men were left standing.

Raven was standing behind Graham holding a pistol to his back and Edgar was in front of Graham with a tight hold of the scruff of his shirt, but he realized that Lydia was awakened and let go of his foe.

"Lydia, you're back to your body?"

Noting paying any care to his ruffled hair, he gave her a child-like, defenseless smile which sent an almost painful, strange feeling through Lydia.

She became quite shy and embarrassed and took her eyes off of him.

She spotted the fairy cat on top of her lap and as she felt relieved she picked up Nico into her arms.

"Nico, thank you...."

"Oh, it's nothing. Lydia, that's enough. You'll ruffle my fur coat."

Nico didn't like being touched and handled like a cat. There was no way a respectable gentleman wouldn't allow himself to be cradled and stoked like a pet animal. But, Lydia didn't know how she should act if she were to let go of Nico, and so, didn't mind him wriggling in her arms to get out.

"You know, in these sorts of situation, wouldn't you normally jump into my arms?" said Edgar with an unhappy gesture of combing up his blond hair.

Probably just now, Lydia had the overpowering feeling of wanting to do that, but that would be such an embarrassing act for her and so she didn't know what to do.

"It would be too dangerous to go into the arms of someone like you."

Raven had told her it would be safe, but she couldn't believe him. For now, it could have been that she didn't have the strength to be able to slap him if it was necessary.

As she thought that in her head, she wondered if it was indeed as Raven said, and even if Edgar only said things to grab other people's favor, he actually didn't see her as a woman of interest to him; but I don't care about that, she denied to herself.

She really wasn't herself right now.

".....But, I do sincerely appreciate the fact that you helped me. Thank you....."

For a brief moment, Edgar leaned his face down to hers to inspect her face.

"Your face is a little red. Do you feel ill?"

"I-I'm fine!"

In an attempt to block his eyes to her, she lifted up Nico in front of her, which made Edgar and Nico looking into each other's eyes close-up, and made Nico let out an irritated, low howl.

Making a mixed frown and smile, Edgar stepped away from Lydia and Nico and once again turned to face Graham.

"Oi, do you think you're going to get away with this untouched?" threatened Graham in an tough act.

However, Edgar completely ignored him and asked a question to Raven.

"Raven, how's outside the ship?"

"I have removed the ladder. Even if the escaped sailors went and called for more help, it would take them some time. I have thrown those still remaining on the ship into the river."

As he gave his reply, Raven handed out a piece of paper which Edgar took and ripped it to shreds. It looked like it was the contract that he had signed just earlier with Graham, so Raven must have gone and stolen it.

"And with that, our contract had not happened. So, which means, Lord Graham, we can have a calm and quiet discussion together."

"Discussion? What is there to talk about?"

"About your hidden assets."

Even Lydia could tell from her place that the blood left on Graham's face.

"Lord Graham, when you had your stolen goods or properties you gained through illegal ways delivered, you would slip out a number of them for yourself. And you had those hidden in the basement of a familiar noblewoman's

residence. You had told her that place was an ideal storage place for a scarce number of rare wines, and got the permission to use her basement store room.”

“.....I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“I don’t mind if you don’t. That noblewoman also had a debt herself. She needed to sell off her home, so I went ahead and bought it. She had told me that the cheap wine stored in the basement belonged to you, and I had those transferred to a different location, but that house, and everything inside it, belongs to me. The room with its passageway blocked by a shelf wall and the room which was constructed unbeknownst to the noblewoman and the things in it, whether they once belonged to someone, are now own by me. That is all there is to it.”

Lydia had forgotten to let go of Nico and Nico remained still as a doll, clutched in her arms, as both their eyes were completely focused on the intensely tense air between Edgar and Graham.

“The reason of your habit of splurging and putting your hands on the Worpole family assets so carelessly was because you figured you would still have your hidden assets, didn’t you? But when the situation turned to the worst, the noblewoman had sold her house. It’s important not to turn away your lover like that just because you grew tired of her. Or then, she wouldn’t have sold off her house without first coming to you for advice.”

His smile that looked like the devil was the side of Edgar that Lydia didn’t know. “And yet, you figured that no one had found out about your hidden treasures in the basement room, and so you planned a sneak-in to recover it. And yet, it turns out the basement had been worked on by someone, and the wall that was suppose to open up to the hidden room was covered up with a new wall. And just when you were in a panic because it wouldn’t be a quiet, easy job to dig it out, you were found out by Lady Doris that you had been using the baron family fortune.Is how I imagined things happened.”

“What, are you after.”

Even Graham, must have felt the abnormality in Edgar’s tenacious and perfect scheme.

“Your self destruction.”

“You plan to kill me.....?”

“There is no need for me to be the one to do that.”

He pressed the tip of his walking stick into Graham’s chest.

“The safely guarded, sealed diamond from South Africa, and the engraved gold to prevent them from being go through illegal channels, all of those goods were being handled by Prince. You were aware of that, no? That man hates and above else does not stand it when he gets tricked or betrayed. If he finds out that you were helping yourself to his belongings, I’m sure he wouldn’t let you get away with it.”

“So, yo-you know Prince? No, wait, just wait a moment, please don’t do thatLord Earl, I’ll do anything, you can take all of my money and assets....”

“I had said that I wished for your destruction. How about I put you in a wooden box along with one of those gold bars with engravings on it with you and send you off to Prince? I can imagine the look on his face when he realized that it was a present from me. He’s sure to turn that fury towards you.”

That probably was his declaration of war against Prince by using Graham.

Edgar’s revenge towards Graham was just the first step meant for the one he could never forgive the most.

Lydia felt cold sweat run down her back.

“Wh-Who are you?”

“You should know that.”

“It’s a lie. You’re not really an earl....”

“Oh, my, then can I have you remember my name? Oh, Lord Graham, when I first met you eight years ago, you looked at me and laughed, saying I looked like a near dead juvenile vagrant. I wanted to take a look at your face so I wouldn’t forget, but my vision was blurred so I couldn’t really see.”

Graham’s eyes opened wide. His legs were trembling.

“No, you couldn’t be, you’re....”

The words that came after that, could have been Edgar’s real name. But it was such a small whisper that Lydia couldn’t hear it at all.

“Prince does not forgive those who handle what belongs to his roughly. You

apparently had learned from your mistake and treated Lydia carefully. In my case, I was treated like a dirty piece of luggage, and I heard afterwards that you were put through quite a horrific experience by angering Prince."

Out of the blue, Graham let out a horrified scream and made a lung at Edgar in front of him.

But, Edgar gave a strike at him with his knee and to the wobbling Graham, he gave a finishing strike with his cane.

Lydia let out a small cry and turned her eyes away.



Edgar didn't do anything further more to hurt him but his cold eyes that didn't show a hint of sympathy showed that they wouldn't accept any pleases of help or defending excuses.

It might have not been as scary if he had acted in rage and a fit of anger.

His cold glaring eyes continued as Raven held down Graham who was struggling to fight back until he was knocked down unconscious.

Edgar was aiming his overflowing rage at Prince who stood beyond Graham. But, even if he let out his anger or make his revenge, what he lost would never come back.

Edgar also wouldn't be saved.

He was free from the hands of Prince and obtained his freedom and yet he could have placed himself in another fierce and lonely battle.

How sad is that.

Edgar turned around to Lydia's tired sigh and now he hid the heartless, cold presence and had the look of his gentleman self.

"I'm sorry, Lydia. To show you such an unbearable scene."

He walked over to her and offered his hand and said let's go. Lydia ignored it and stood up by herself to stare quietly at Edgar.

"Are you going to put that man into a wooden box?"

"You don't have to know that. Since you're not one of us."

He looked back at her with a slightly lonely expression.

Yes, Lydia wasn't a part of his group. He acted in desperation to save her like she was a valuable member inside his ring, but since she wasn't with them, she couldn't take any step further to him.

But, she couldn't agree to this.

"Edgar, what was your purpose in hiring me as your fairy doctor? Wasn't it to help you as earl and the new you?"

".....Let's take about that later. We need to get out of here pretty soon, or the rest of his men might return."

"What are you saying? Then, we have to hurry up to find and rescue Doris and Rosalie. The two of them were also put on this ship, weren't they?"

"I don't think there's any obligation for us to help them."

For a instant, Lydia couldn't believe her ears.

"W-Why?"

"We don't have that kind of time and besides, this ship isn't able to leave port. Everything here will be searched eventually."

When it would be search is the question. A few days? A few weeks? That would be the same as leaving them to die.

"But, I know that the two of them are being confined somewhere. I can't leave when I know that...."

Reaching to that, Lydia suddenly realized.

They knew and yet eight years ago, Edgar was abandoned.

"Do you loathe them? Because Rosalie and Doris stole the 'fairy egg' from you and yet they didn't help you?"

He looked back at Lydia with a somewhat troubled expression.

"I don't really remember."

"Rosalie told me that she met a young boy who was tied up and locked in that river-side warehouse eight years ago. She thought he was a thief and took his water-sealed agate and never saw him since.... That boy was you wasn't it? Rosalie and Doris had gotten into the warehouse that Lord Graham used to confine you to hand you over to Prince, right?"

He let out a breath of air, which didn't look like it was from remembering his painful past but looked like he was tired of Lydia's meddling.

"Even if that were so, it wasn't that much to hate someone for. Lydia, it would be natural for those girls to abandon a filthy young boy. He would have nothing to do with them and they can figure out that it would do them any good to get involved with it. I'm sorry, but I don't care if they are going to be the victims of their own uncle..."

Before Edgar could finish what he was saying, Lydia had slapped his face with the palm of her hand.

The sound of flesh against flesh ringed through the air.

Nico gasped with a 'whoa' and that made her realize what she did, but the bubbling feeling of malaise inside Lydia didn't go away just by hitting Edgar.

"You really are a scoundrel! You took advantage of Rosalie's feelings by luring her with your sweet talk and used her and now that you don't need her anymore, you're going to throw her away?See, you really do resent them. You really wanted to be saved by then! Even if they have nothing to do with you, and even if there was nothing good in getting involved, if there was someone who helped you, you wouldn't have suffered like this...."

She was supposed to have been furious at his heartlessness, but it was painful when Lydia thought about the cause that made him have that cursed way of thinking.

She couldn't make up her mind about what was right and wrong so she could only spill out the feelings that were building up in her.

"So, then, I will save them! I will save Rosalie and Doris in your place! Even if there is no profit, the wish to help others should be in everybody. Was there gain in lose when you were helping me? I thought that it wasn't and I want to believe it was so, so that's why I'm going to help them!"

Still in the heated state after she finished speaking, she turned to back to Edgar.
"Nico, we're going now!"

Even though he had the bothersome look, Nico jumped down from the bed, and openly trotted after Lydia on his back legs.

"Raven, did you understand that?" asked Edgar as he stood in a daze, as his eyes was looking at the doorway that Lydia and Nico walked out of.

"I couldn't understand the logic in it, but I feel like she went out for Lord Edgar's sake."

".....I have that feeling as well."

He placed his hand on his cheek that was given a hit and he felt a burning heat than pain.

It was almost like it was a form of passionate expression of love.

For some odd reason, Lydia would say things that Edgar would have never imagined and did things that he wouldn't have expected.

And because of that, Edgar was pulled in an unimaginable direction.

If she had messed up the plan that he had meticulous thought up, only to break into a completely new path which made him as he was now, then, maybe, this time as well.

"Lord Edgar"

Raven called to stop him. Because, Edgar was silently walking out of the room.

"I can't leave Lydia by herself. Since, there could be Graham's men still lurking around."

"What shall we do with him."

He was referring to the unconscious Graham.

"Leave him."

He felt like there was something more important than revenge in the direction that Lydia was heading.

Because, those mysterious colored eyes of hers may be looking at something

important that Edgar wasn't able to see.



Lydia was wandering around inside the deserted ship. There were a number of places that looked like a tornado had passed through, but she could guess that it may have been caused by Raven.

It didn't look like it was caused by a fight or combat, but more the trail of Raven forcefully entering as he was looking around for Edgar.

Since every door like door had been broken down by the work of some axe-like object, she guessed that the sailors must have run-off than stay and try to stop Raven.

Imagining the sight of that expressionless person causing havoc wherever he went really made her see him as a living, breathing weapon of war.

Inside that disarranged ship, Lydia aimlessly went around to carefully searched the rooms, but it wasn't that easy to locate Rosalie and Doris.

"Hey, Nico, don't you sense anything?"

"What are you saying that I sense."

"Like, smells."

"I am not a dog."

Just then, Lydia picked up the sound of a woman's scream.

"It's this way!" Lydia went off in a dash.

"Oi, be careful. If it's a scream, then couldn't that mean there's someone else there?" said Nico, as he followed her.

Oh, yes, he could be right.

She made sure to not make as much noise to give away that they were approaching as she rushed to the direction of the voice.

She stopped at the bend of a crossway as she could sense someone was present close-by around the corner, and after she peeked out, a figure and the person's orange hair stood out even in this darkly lit place.

Rosalie was being carried on a plump man's shoulder and was about to be taken off somewhere.

"That man, he's the president of Graham's company."

"Hmm, since Raven came and made a commotion, he's thinking of moving her

to a different place? Oi, Lydia, what are you going to do?"

When Nico turned around, Lydia was already gripping a mop.

"Let's go, Nico."

"Ehh, idiot, stop! This is too reckless...."

But, she got set for only a second and then raced out. Gripping onto the pole of the mop, she swung it down as she aimed at the man from behind.

"Whoa....!"

Letting out a grunt, the man wobbled over as he let go of Rosalie.

"You, bloody, wench."

In no time had the furious man grabbed the mob out of Lydia's hands. He reached out to get his hands on Lydia.

Just then, Rosalie grasped onto the man's leg. He tripped forward and fell face down, and then she sunk her teeth into him.

Lydia rushed to pick up the mop and she too repeatedly hit him with it.

The man crawled along the floor in an effort to escape, but accidentally went tumbling down a near-by staircase against the wall on the floor down to the bottom of the ship.

"Hurry, shut the door!"

The two of them hustled to lift up two wooden boards that acted as doors to close up the stairs.

After the pounding sound of the closing wooden doors and latching the lock, it wasn't frightening any more no matter how much the locked-in man yelled or bellowed at them.

They quickly ran away from there and was finally able to take a breath of relief in an empty, quiet place, and when the two of them looked at each other, it wasn't sure who was the first, but the two of them relaxed the stern look on their faces.

"Miss Rosalie, were you being locked-up at the bottom of the ship?"

"Yes..., but just earlier, that man suddenly came in, and took me out to take me somewhere...."

It was there, she remembered what she had done to Lydia and nervously backed away.

"More than that, why are you here? He...Edgar came to see me and told me to reveal your location..... Weren't you rescued by him?"

"Well, yes, I was, but I came here to rescue you."

The look on her face suddenly changed, like she was angry. And then, she turned her back to Lydia.

"That's impossible. Because, I, I did that awful thing to you...."

"Yes, that sure was awful."

"That's why I was nearly killed by Edgar!"

"Eh?"

"It's true, there's something wrong with him!He seemed like he was used to threatening people, and had that sweet, melting smile on his face as he was trying to kill me."

Yes, he would be capable of that. She could effortlessly imagine the sight and being able to do that was depressing.

She hoped that he didn't have the intent to kill her, but the reason behind that why he didn't could be just be that there was no profit in doing that for Edgar.

"Yes, that man did the wrong thing. Even I'm always fooled around by him."

"You're lying. You're a part of his group. You say that you're here to help me, but what are you really going to do with me? Are you going to get even?"

"No, I'm not. Miss Rosalie, when you were locked-in, did you understand the feelings of being scared and alone?"

Trembling her shoulders slightly, Rosalie looked up at her with a frightened look.

".....Yes, I understand....., that's why I know that this happened because I deserved it."

"Then, please believe what I'm saying. I understand how you feel, so I'm here to help you."

Lydia gave her a smile and held out her hand to Rosalie.

"Now, let's go. We still need to find Miss Doris and get her out since those crooks could come back."

She didn't take Lydia's hand because she must have still had doubts about her. And yet, Rosalie appeared like she was still going to go along with Lydia.

Perhaps, she was worried about Doris.

"Are you saying that Doris is also on this ship?"

"I think, most likely. She was also locked up in that warehouse. After that, Lord Graham came into the warehouse and should have taken her onto this ship with me."

Rosalie gave a surprised look. She must have never imagined that Doris was in the warehouse. But if Graham was the culprit, she must have understood because of what she was put through.

"I didn't know that Uncle was keeping Doris confined. He was our relative and I trusted him, so I can't believe he would do this for the sake of the family money...."

Rosalie stopped in her tracks in a nervous stance.

"I can't see Doris. I have done so much mean things to her and I even said that I wished her would disappear.... That's why I didn't know that any of this was happening and thought she was recovering in the countryside. I didn't even send her a sympathy letter, and felt offended that she hadn't sent me any kind of word."

"But, Miss Doris didn't seem like she was mad at you. If you want to reconcile, you just have to apologize."

"Apologize?"

But, Rosalie's response was a heavily puzzled look.

"I couldn't possibly apologize. If I did that, it would make me a loser."

"That's not the problem...."

"But, it's Doris' fault for hiding something from me. This never would have happened, if she would have just told me the truth about Uncle."

"Thought, you do feel that you did something bad to her, don't you?"

"But, I don't want to apologize. Ever since we lost our parents in the accident, I was the one who protected her. I was the guardian of that girl who was always crying. I'm the only one who can be close to her, and yet, if I apologized, that's like I'm saying I'm a bad, mean girl. Then, Doris is sure to grow apart from me."

"You're quite possessive."

"That's because if I didn't have Doris, if I didn't have her who understood the

same pain of suddenly lost your parents at seven years old....”

“Then, all the more you need to rescue her...”

“No, I can’t, I don’t want to see her, I’m never going to apologize!”

The reason she stubbornly refused could be, instead of fearing the looming danger to Doris and herself, she was frightened of the moment her friend, who she only knew how to keep by her side by taking control of her with her egotistical behavior and wishes.

Seeing Rosalie remained standing in the same spot and looking like she wasn’t going to budge, there was nothing Lydia could do any further.

“I will go search for Miss Doris. So, you need to hide in that room. Understand? Be careful not to be found by Graham’s men. And keep quiet.”

Rosalie didn’t give a response, but Lydia knew she couldn’t waste any more time.

She left behind Rosalie and made sure that Nico was following her as he looked at her like she was absurd and started to inspect the rooms she hadn’t checked yet.

“How troublesome, humans are. I can’t see why they have such bizarre, warped ways of thinking,” mumbled Nico.

“Yes. Everything would be settled if they just said their feelings to the person they cared about.”

However, she could sort of imagine Rosalie’s feelings. Even if you did care for someone, that didn’t mean they would accept your feelings and you would be scared of being hurt when your trust and hope might be betrayed.

As a young girl who said she could see fairies, Lydia, who was treated as a freak, also had a part of her that had given up on trying to be liked by others.

Not only could she see, but she also had the hope of someday growing up to be like her mother and tried to give advice to those who got injured because of fairies or were suffering from their actions, but they only thought she was making up some lie or false accusation or doing a prank on them and treated like a nuisance.

Because she knew that a fairy doctor’s ability would be difficult to be understood by normal people and thought it couldn’t be helped, so even if she

fell in love with someone, she probably wouldn't be able to make herself confess her feelings, and was sure she would have given up from the beginning. Even if they didn't openly treat her as a freak, for people who don't believe that fairies exist, they wouldn't be able to shake away the creepy, eerie feeling about Lydia's ability.

I wonder about that for Edgar. She was curious about that because he was a rare person who gave Lydia an unaffected, normal reaction.

But, she wouldn't be able to know if he truly did or didn't feel creeped out about Lydia's ability.

If it was a separate thing to accept a fairy doctor's ability and to accept them as a normal human being, then she was left with being cautious and couldn't help but keep her guard up.

On the other hand, she would be thrilled if she was treated as a member of the group and wished that she would be able to trust them. That's why she didn't want Edgar to do the irresponsible act of abandoning the two girls. She didn't want only her ability to be understood, but also her feelings. And yet, she couldn't bring herself to honestly express that, and ended up slapping him and start a fight, which didn't make her all that different from Rosalie.

To be able to tell the truth was actually quite a difficult thing to do.

She wondered if that big liar just wasn't able to say the truth.

Even if it was to escape from Prince, he wouldn't be able to reveal his past criminal actions to people. Even his revenge that he was avenging for his friends, couldn't be explained to naïve Lydia who grew up and lived in a peaceful world.

That must have been why he kept his secrets from her and used her when he was fully aware of the dangers.

And yet, he unexpectedly worried for her state and acted kind by rescuing her. He was a man with intentions she could not read.

But, it wasn't like she couldn't completely understand, and because she felt like she had times when she could pick up his thoughts, that's why Lydia would be brought into this mess.

Edgar would get Lydia involved into his business and brought up the topic about

the ‘fairy egg’ and the fogman and use her as bait, but she wanted to hope that he actually was waiting for someone to save him.

He asked her on top of the lake boat to help rescue his dead comrades from the misty fog and she came to believe that what he said then, was what he was truly hoping for.

In the nearly dead state he was confined in, he imagined that he saw the appearance of fairies and made a promise in exchange with the water-sealed agate and is still waiting in the dark for his rescue. That image lingered in her mind, and that sentimental thought couldn’t be erased from her mind maybe because Lydia knew that fairies had the characteristic to never break their promise.

If the fairy that made a trade with Edgar eight years ago, had an unavoidable reason that they couldn’t keep their promise, then she had the feeling like she was passed on the job to do something about it herself.

Since, she knew that as a fairy doctor, a promise that was kept unfulfilled was a bad thing for both fairies and humans.

“Nico, don’t you hear footsteps?”

Lydia suddenly had the feeling like she sensed a moving presence and stopped her pace. But, there was no reply from Nico.

“Hey, Nico, where did you go?”

That whimsical fairy cat would suddenly just disappear so he was never reliable. Even as she thought that, Lydia’s body went rigid from someone approaching her and so she focused to hear any sound. She could indeed hear footsteps.

Just when she inched back into the back of a dark closet, she was yanked back from behind.

“Ah....”

“Quiet. It’s me, Lydia.”

She realized it was Edgar and managed to gulp down her scream.

The approaching presence could have been a sailor left behind inside the ship as the figure seemed like it didn’t know what was going on as it was turning its head looking around. In the person’s hand was a knife and the footsteps was just about to pass them, and her heart beat harder at the thought that

they could be found.

The two of them carefully shut the closet door, trying not to be heard, which made the inside of the closet completely dark, but at the sound of the footsteps getting right up near them, the darkness wasn't the thing that was frightening anymore.

But, even after the person went off into the distance, her heart wouldn't calm down. Because, Edgar still had his arms around Lydia's body.

"The person's gone."

"Yes."

"All right, let go, already."

But he didn't show any signs of letting Lydia go.

"If I let go of you in this darkness, I feel like I wouldn't be able to make sure you are right here."

"Then, you can just open this door."

"I wish it had been you...."

"What are you saying?"

"If it was you who was the fairy that I saw in my confused state of mind, you might have pulled me out of this darkness."

Was he making up lines just to show off again? She couldn't tell if it was so or not by his unceremonial, plainly put manner of speaking.

It was dark so she couldn't see his face. Only he didn't put too much strength in his arms which were carefully wrapped around Lydia's body. It was just that simple treatment that made her feel like she was hearing a rare confession from him.

".....Then, I'll take you out."

She had said that in a serious way as she could, but she needed the courage like she was going to jump off the London Bridge. She expected that she was going to be laughed at, yet, unexpectedly, he remained quiet like he was deep in thought.

Eventually, he opened his mouth to speak.

"It's from eight years ago."

The warm air from his breath brushed against her hair. Lydia thought to herself

that the rising beat of her heart was because she was desperately trying to think of a way that would save Edgar.

"It isn't too late. I will keep that promise you made eight years ago. The fairy you saw wasn't able to keep its promise because of unavoidable circumstances and promises are meant to be fulfilled. So, that's why, we should go rescue those two girls together. There is no need for you to avenge yourself. There's no need to hate somebody. You are able to live without relying on hatred."

She couldn't bare remaining still and so when Lydia leaned towards the door, Edgar's arms easily unraveled themselves.

Even with the light inside the dim interior of the ship, if it shined through the crack of the bearly open closet doors, it felt bright to their eyes.

"Why aren't you hating Rosalie? And, me?"

He narrowed his eyes to the light.

"That's because I was always saved. You continued to encourage me while I was inside the bottle. Even in the short while I was confined I didn't feel alone and I didn't have to fear the darkness, and so I'm free from hating and blaming someone for it."

The two of them stepped out into the hallway.

Edgar gave her a look like he was confused and she couldn't tell what he felt from what Lydia said. But, she was sure that he was going to give his hand to help rescue Doris.

"Did you search this way?"

"No, not yet."

"Let's go."

In the end, Edgar tossed aside Graham and came to follow after Lydia.

It may not be that he has given up his revenge, but he was working to compromise with Lydia.

He would have a frivolous attitude and fool around and poke fun at her, but he was also a mysterious person who could sense what Lydia was feeling or what she really wanted to say.

That's why, Lydia couldn't help but say things that she thought were normally too embarrassing.

Perhaps, Edgar might be secretly laughing to himself at Lydia for seriously saying that she would bring him out of the darkness, but to believe that he might really have understood her seriousness, that might be because she was so simple-minded.

"You know, Lydia, I think I'm near to falling in love with you," he said suddenly. Yes, he was enjoying poking her around.

Or, maybe....?

No, however simple-minded I may be, I'm not that stupid.

"Those kinds of lines of yours will never be taken seriously."

Even if she stick it to him straight, he still was chuckling at her.

There were so many things that overlapped, and so right then, Lydia had completely forgotten about the other major problem.



The reason why Nico had slipped away from her was because he spotted something troublesome.

The bogey beast that moved in a bouncing, jumping run, had gotten his body back after Nico had made him disappear yesterday. Nico had gotten a quick glance of it out of the corner of his eye and quickly dashed to follow it.

"What an annoying little critter, geesh."

Even as Nico thought that, he carefully followed after the bogey beast.

The devilish fae appeared like it was looking for something. Could it be that orange-haired girl?

He twitched his nose to try to pick up a scent and immediately rushed in the direction that Rosalie might be at.

The meeky smell of Thames River mixed with the erry mist of the smog shrouded the inside of the ship. Wherever you were, that followed you in every part of this city.

More than the smell, Nico felt the moisture-laden air. It seeped into his whiskers and fur coat and that pasty and clammy feeling made his fur feel more heavy than normal.

Either way today too, Londonwas enveloped in the fog. There was no wind and the city was covered in a heavy, cold humidity.

Everyone wondered when the spring winds would come.
(Ahh, Master is calling me. If I don't hurry, I will be heavily scolded,) mumbled the bogey beast to itself. Nico perked up his ears as he followed after it.

(Oh, geesh, how could I allow my great self to be beaten by a fur-covered monster cat.)

I ain't a monster.

(Oh, but that fairy doctor is still inside the bottle. The body was taken away so I couldn't have any fun with it. And the Blue Knight Earl is on this ship. What a perfect chance. If he's defeated, then it's the revival of my Master!)

Blue Knight Earl? That's Edgar.

The bogey beast that was bounding around inside the ship must have seen Edgar. But, it looks like it didn't know Lydia was here after she was rescued out of the bottle.

He wondered what kind of relationship the bogey beast had with the earl. He remained confused as he kept his pursuit, but eventually, the bogey beast found the room that Rosalie was hiding in.

(Here it is. I can hear Master's voice.)

Voice? But Nico couldn't hear anything. It could have been a noise that had the same characteristics as the bogey beast, and if that were so, then that [Master] seemed like it was something of a troublesome or deadly nature.

From the slight crack of the open door, the bogey beast slipped inside. Nico also faded his body and passed through the door.

Rosalie was sitting near a round skylight windowsill. The bogey beast that went up to her, remained in an invisible form that humans were unable to see and called out its master.

Of course, it didn't refer to Rosalie. Something seemed to be inside the faint green stone that Rosalie had in her hand.

"So that's the master."

Even Nico could tell the strong presence of the charm spell that repelled evil. His instinct told him that if he were to touch it, it was dangerous as he would be sucked into it.

"So that means, it's something stupid enough to be sucked into that thing, right?"

The rock itself appeared mesmerizingly beautiful and extremely appealing, but because they couldn't touch it, it was a charm to ward off evil.

(Master, forgive me for my lateness. Oh, no, you will wait no further. I will immediately put the girl to work. Ahh, you mean the forerunner? Yes, I have put it in a trap. It was a stupid one, so I trapped it while it had fallen asleep in a pile of its favorite leaves. There is nothing that will stand in your way now, so please do not worry.)

What did it mean about forerunner? Was it the nemesis of the bogey beast and its master? If so, it was sure that it was in a state that couldn't stop the two of them. To even put Lydia, the Earl's fairy doctor, inside a bottle was quite a job for a bonehead bogey beast.

Oh, but, he had no time to be surprised by that.

As Nico spied on them even further, the bogey beast bounced up to stand right in front of Rosalie.

So that she could perceive it, it appeared its body to the human eye.

(Ahh, my lady, how I have searched for you. What happened for you to be trapped inside a place like this?)

Just seconds ago when it was calling her a little brat, it suddenly put up the façade of a cajoling attitude towards the girl. Rosalie, who had her head down, whipped her face up.

"Fairy....., where have you been! I was tricked by Uncle and had such an awful experience! No matter how much I called you, you never appeared....."



(Please forgive me. There was a small unanticipated accident and I was in a state of unconsciousness. Ahh, but, everything is fine now. If you would just follow my word, everything would work out perfectly.)

“What are you saying I do? If I’m seen by one of Uncle’s men, I’ll be locked up again. And I can’t escape from this ship, since I can’t swim. So hurry up and go get help.”

(Yes, yes, but I also happened to see that Earl on this ship as well. I’m sure he’s here to rescue my lady...)

“What! Why is that man here! You have to be kidding, I’m never going near that man again!”

(Eh, wh-why would that be? I was told that the earl was my lady’s ideal man of your dreams...)

“He tried to kill me! His attitude changed all of a sudden....Even Uncle, who was so kind to me, I’m never going to trust men ever again!”

Seeing that the bogey beast was confused and in a state of panic, Nico guessed that it had been planning to make Rosalie get near Edgar.

It was going to get its [Master] that was inside Rosalie’s stone near the target in

order to revive it.

Perhaps the reason why Rosalie fell in love with Edgar and calculatingly approached him was because the thing inside the stone had learned about the man called the Blue Knight Earl and used its magic to get near him.

The Blue Knight Earl it targeted was a type of man that constantly put up a sweet, good face towards all women was sure to be a godsend.

For the bogey beast and its master, to manipulate the girl and inflict an attack on the earl, the most simple and easiest way to control was to have her fall completely in love with him.

(Oh...., oh, yes, my lady, if something like that had happened, then you must not let that man get away with it.)

It looked like the bogey beast had come up with a new way to make Rosalie go on the move.

(You must let him have a taste of his own medicine. Please listen carefully, my lady, there is a magical power in that gemstone you hold. If you use that, then you will be able to punish the man who slighted you.)

“Punish.....?”

(Yes, just leave it to me. Ah, yes, please be careful not to drop the ‘fairy egg.’ Everything is alright, because you are a courageous one.)

The dark, evil inside the stone seeped out to sink into the weak opening of Rosalie’s heart. It was trying to take control of her.

Even though it was sealed within the stone, if one were to keep ahold of it for a long period of time, then they would be influenced by the dark magic slowly seeping out.

Normally, it should be under the care of someone who had a strong tolerance against it.

If it was in the old days, a priest or nobleman, and even if there was no guarantee that they were in the same position now, there were sure to be people who had a high tolerance against it, so it shouldn’t be in the hands of a girl like Rosalie who could be easily influenced by it.

But, in reality, she was the one who had it.

Prompted by the bogey beast and manipulated by the dark magic, Rosalie stood

up.

Her feelings of admiration towards Edgar, yet being double-crossed, and the fearful feelings after being put through a horrible experience had now changed to a bitter hatred inside her.

"Oh, this is bad," whispered Nico. "Hmm, I don't care what happens to that flirt. But at this rate, Lydia might get in trouble."

Before the two of them left, Nico dashed out of the room.

He hurried in a dash with his back legs to let Lydia know about what he just saw.

Chapter 7 - The blessing that arrives on the spring wind

In the dimly lit hallway that Edgar and Lydia had just started to walk, there was a shadow that approached them without a sound.

Lydia let out a shrilling scream at the shadow figure that suddenly appeared standing in front of her.

In reflex, she grabbed ahold of a near-by pillar and then heard a monotonous voice say 'pardon me.'

When she took a look, it was Raven.

"Yo-you scared me...."

"Lydia, you might as well have clung onto me."

How is it that he could come up with such lines in any kind of situation.

".....I'm instinctually avoiding!"

She turned her head away but if Raven, who was apparently moving around the ship by himself came back, that would mean this wasn't a situation for him to be having fun with Lydia. Edgar immediately changed to a serious expression and turned to face Raven.

"Lord Edgar, a number of boats have come up aside the ship. I believe in due time, Graham's men will come aboard."

"Alright. Let's hurry."

"Lady Doris is this way," guided Raven.

"How do you know?"

"I asked one of Graham's men who was yelling from the bottom of the ship. There was a commotion inside the ship so they had made her asleep and switched her to a place that wouldn't be found by someone from outside."

That must have been the man that Rosalie and she beaten. At that time, after he was done with Doris, Lydia must had come across him just as he was trying to hide Rosalie.

As he was walking, Raven handed Edgar a pistol. It was the one that he had

supposedly left behind at Graham's office. After that, Raven turned towards Lydia.

"Oh, yes, Miss Carlton, I forgot to hand you this."

The thing Raven held out to her was the tin can from not too long ago.

"Um, that actually doesn't really belong to me."

But, Raven must have believed that it was something that she must accept and so he remained holding it out to her.

"It might be in the way for Lydia to hold. I'll keep it."

After Edgar said that, he finally handed it over like he was convinced.

Again, with a quick pace, the two of them followed after Raven, but all of a sudden, there was the noise of movement and commotion around them.

"Lydia, can you run?"

"Yes."

At the same time she replied, Edgar pulled her arm. The three of them dashed off in a sprint as the loud sound of voices slowly grew close.

"I found them, this way!" There was a yelling voice of a man.

"Lord Edgar, I will go keep them at bay."

"All right, I'll it to you. Where's the location of Lady Doris?"

"At the end of this passage. There is a door that's hidden by cargo at the back of the storageroom."

At the same time when Edgar nodded, Raven turned back behind them.

Lydia followed Edgar further down the corridor. The sound of loud voices had dimmed away probably because they chased after Raven.

She wondered how many men of Graham were on this ship. She worried if Raven was going to be alright.

At such a last minute, Lydia finally began to realize that she was trying to do an extremely reckless thing.

She had stormed out of the room declaring that she wasn't going to abandon Doris and Rosalie, but even before she could rescue them, she was putting Edgar and Raven in danger.

She couldn't forgive Edgar's self-centered way of thinking, but she was the one who messed up Edgar's original plan of rescuing Lydia on top of successfully

completing his revenge and safely escaping from the ship into a hit-or-miss, haphazard, by the chance kind of plan.

"What is the matter, Lydia, are you scared?"

But, if she were to abandon the two of them then, she believed she was going to carry an unbearable regret for the rest of her life.

Even if they were able to get off the ship, there could have been a way to rescue the two girls, but she didn't want to prolong the time in the frightening situation they would have to be in.

She didn't like how Edgar didn't feel any remorse at all in leaving behind the two of them.

It wasn't because of her sense of justice, but she didn't realize that she was hoping there was a part of Edgar that wasn't just a simple criminal villain as Lydia shook her head hard.

"I'm not scared, this is the way I chose."

"Such a positive attitude."

"No, I'm not, I'm just reckless.I know, but I don't want to live regretting."

"I'm always in regret. So much that I think my greatest sin is living."

He said it in a way like it was nothing, but Lydia was taken aback at the heavy seriousness of his words.

"There is no such thing."

"If I didn't interfere, most of the members of my band would still be alive even now. Ermine too..... And Raven as well, I sometimes think there could have been a way not to put that instinctual killing drive of his in my hands, but find a way to properly control it with his own will."

"But, weren't you the one to release everyone free from the control of Prince?"

"Free.... Only Raven remains alive."

"Do you think your friends wanted to remain alive as slaves? Then, they wouldn't have gone with you. You gave them their freedom. Didn't you at least teach them that their hearts could never be chained by anyone?"

Edgar, who remained looking straight forward, must have already thought of what Lydia could think up long ago, a number of times over.

The two of them went to the back of the storage room that had piles of cargo

and packaged goods stacked up and he opened his mouth to speak like he was talking to himself.

"At one time I tried to think of it that way. But, sometimes, I felt like that was just my ego wanting to believe that...."

At the end of the open pathway between the stacks of piled cargo on each side, there indeed was a door that Raven had told them.

"This must be it. It's locked."

Because Edgar centered his focus onto that, it seemed like their discussion ended and so Lydia nodded back at him.

He took out a pin from his inner pocket and easily opened the lock with it.

It was an unimaginable special skill if one were to grow up in a respectable noble family.

Peering through the crack of the open door, in a small space more like a closet than a room, they immediately could see that Doris had been locked inside.

"Miss Doris, please wake up."

Lydia knelt down and tried to shake her awake, but it didn't look like she was going to wake up at all.

"They must have used drugs to make her asleep. I'll carry her."

"Oi, Lydia, we have a problem!"

Just then, the one to come running in was a panicked Nico.

"Nico! Where have you been?"

"Who cares, just hurry and run. There's a big problem that arised."

On the floor by Lydia's feet, Nico kept on ranting on.

"It's all right, we know. Graham's men are approaching, right?"

"Huhh? It's something more troublesome than that! The bogey beast has come back, and it's now controlling Rosalie with its master to kill the earl!"

Oh, no, that's right.

Lydia finally remembered.

"Edgar, I'd forgot! The fogman is after you!"

"Fogman?"

He turned around from where he was kneeling down next to Doris to give her a confused look. Of course, he would be. For him, it was a name out of a

storybook, and being suddenly told he was being targeted by one, he was sure to not be able to grasp the danger of the situation.

“I have no memory of how something like that would hold a grudge against me.”

“Oi, Lydia, it’s a fogman?!”

Now, even Nico was in a panic.

“The bogey beast had said so. Nico, do you know what the fogman is weak against?”

“A demon like that doesn’t have a weakness, even if it did, there’s nothing that we could do about it, right? Now that I remember, it said something like it had a nemesis, and the bogey beast was saying something like it was trapped in somewhere with leaves.”

“Whose their nemesis? What leaves?”

“How would I know. No, wait, I think I heard something like that before....”

“Lydia, why would I be targeted after?”

There were voices coming from both directions, making Lydia on the verge of a breakdown.

“Uhhh, so in other words, the fogman bears a grudge against the Blue Knight Earl. It was sealed inside the ‘fairy egg’ by one of the ancestors in the earl family. Since you inherited the title of Blue Knight Earl, it plans to devour you to revive itself.”

“Wait just a moment, there’s a fogman inside the ‘fairy egg’?”

“You’re from a family with a long bloodline, right? That’s why while it was at your family’s house, the blood of your family didn’t allow the fogman inside the agate to get outside even a little bit. But after it was transferred into the hands of Rosalie, I think the power that had been sealing had weakened, and so it called the bogey beast, and had been searching for the Blue Knight Earl for so many years for its revival.”

“.....So, by me meeting Rosalie,”

“Yes, it found out that you had appeared as Blue Knight Earl and had been targeting you.”

“Then, what do you do when you’re attacked by a fogman?”

Lydia held her hand in her hands. Even Lydia didn't know of what to do. She only knew that the only rule to follow for fairies who were a ball of ill will were not to see them, touch them, or approach them, and she only knew that because she was an amateur and inexperienced.

Even if I call myself a fairy doctor, I'm useless, she angrily thought as she scrambled to think up of something.

"Tsk!, what a useless human. If it was the Blue Knight Earl, then he'd be sure to fight with the same power as the fogman," mumbled Nico, displeased.

"But, Edgar isn't the real heir. How would be have such a power."

"I wonder if I'll still be attacked even though I'm not the real one. Don't you think that the fogman wouldn't be able to revive even if it ate me?"

"Well, its life is depending on that, so it's just going to give it a try and eat you regardless."

"I see."

"And, more than the power of the Blue Knight Earl, there could be more value in that it's someone who carries the same name as him."

Suffered from being bottled up by the bogey beast, and becoming furious at being made a bait by Edgar, and her mind desperately trying to think of a way to rescue Rosalie and Doris as she was shaken off her feet by the real face of Edgar, and it was Lydia's fault for completely forgetting to think up of a plan to get rid of the fogman as she was going through all of that.

It was also because she was relaxed and imagined that the bogey beast wouldn't be reappearing this quick.

Anyways, this was the greatest mistake as a fairy doctor.

Ah! Cried Nico in a gasp.

"It's rosemary's, Lydia!"

"What are you talking about?"

"The leaves were Rosemary's.....ahh, how could I not of thought of that."

She had no idea what he was talking about and tilted her head. But, they had no more time to spare in hearing Nico's confusing explanation in this situation.

"Anyhow, it looks like our problem is only that."

There was the pounding, stomping sound of approaching footsteps.

They came pouring in from the entrance of the storage room and circled around Lydia and the two.

From the men who stood as a barricade, Graham stepped out to them.

"My lord, it looks like the tables have turned."

Graham returned his consciousness and had apparently recovered his confidence with the number of his men behind him and grinned at them.

"You may have wanted to make me fall into the trap you methodically planned out, but it looks like you overlooked this opening at the last part."

"I wonder if you're right about that."

"What is there you can do all alone. We threw that walking man of a weapon of yours to the bottom of the ship."

Sure enough, the plump, oily man who was suppose to be locked up by Lydia at the bottom of the ship was in the group of men.

"I'd like you not to underestimate my friend," replied Edgar, in an unexpected unaffected manner.

The ship suddenly swayed enormously to the side.

No, the ship didn't sway, the cargo and packaged goods that were piled up in the storage room had fallen down. Just when they thought one of the piled towers of wooden crates leaned to the side, they came crashing down on top of Graham and his men.

A black figure of a man glided down on top of that.

Raven jumped down onto Graham, who had barely managed to dodge the wooden crates and barrels, and held him down.

Once he held a knife to his throat, the rest of Graham's standing men couldn't move.

But they had no time to relax.

"Lydia, they're here!" yelled Nico who was crawling up onto the fallen piles of wooden crates.

Out of breath, Rosalie came running in.

The bogey beast on top of her shoulder gave them a grin.

"Rosalie, stop, you're just being manipulated by that!"

But Lydia's voice didn't reach her ears.

The dark evil presence that was trapped inside the agate used its power that seeped out to wrap around Rosalie.

Even with a small bit of magic, it linked with Rosalie's feeling of love and hate towards Edgar and now had complete control over her will.

Rosalie must not even know what she was doing right now.

(There's the Earl, get him!)

After the bogey beast shouted out, Rosalie didn't give a moment's hesitation and threw the water-sealed agate stone that she had kept so precious and pounded it onto the floor.

There was a small, tiny crack.

However, the holy water that had been trapped inside it for hundreds of years had finally been released into the air. It evaporated in an instant and faded away.

At the same time, a foul smelling fog bubbled and spilled out and instantly filled the inside of the ship.

There were the sound of the screaming voices of Graham's men, but the fog was so thick that you couldn't even see two steps ahead of you.

Lydia could only see the faint outline of Edgar who stood next to her.

"Lydia, get away from the earl!" came Nico's shouting voice from afar.

The fogman's target was Edgar.

"Hurry and go," said Edgar as he had his eyes on something moving in the far depths of the fog.

"Lord Edgar, where are you!" shouted Raven.

"Raven, don't come!"

It's the fogman.

Lydia's eyes were fastened onto it.

A black, thick shadow stirred up and fused together in the fog.

It wasn't just one.

A number of creatures created from the fog emerged; they were demon dogs that the fogman took along with it. They all circled around them as they growled.

The biggest shape created from the fog was the fogman and she felt its

attention focus onto Edgar as it swayed its large body to the sides back and forth.

Then, its body swelled up like a balloon and lunged towards them in attack.

“Lydia, hurry, run.”

“.....No!”

Fighting back against Edgar who was trying to push her away, Lydia didn’t think as she clung onto him.

At the same time, the two of them were enveloped by a clinging, viscous darkness all around them. It pressed down so hard that is was suffocating.

They must have been attacked, or perhaps swallowed, as there was no sensation of the floor below their feet. They would suddenly feel the temperature drop, like they were thrown into the middle of the outdoor winter freezing air.

“Is this....., inside the fogman’s belly?”

Lydia didn’t know that either. It was too dark to see anything, and her fingertips were numb from the cold.

She felt her strength leave her, like her life source was slowly being sucked out of her.

“I’m so sorry.....” whispered Lydia, as she was beaten down with self-disappointment and regret.

“I’m sorry, I’m so sorry, this happened because of my inexperience. I’m so sorry for being such a useless fairy doctor. I’m so sorry for always saying such self-conceited things and not be able to rescue you.”

“I don’t feel all that bad. I never imagined you would initiatively embrace me. And, you didn’t easily smile in front of me, but it is a luxury to have you cry for me.”

She finally realized she was handing onto him and being cradled by him as he stroked her hair kindly, but it was frightening to let go in this complete blackness, so she remained still

She didn’t care right now if Edgar was a dangerous person or a frivolous rake. Since, she was going to share the same fate as him.

“I know it’s improper at a time like this, but I want you to tell me. Is it your

responsibility as a fairy doctor that made you stay with me to the end? Or, are you letting me romanticize just a little?"

"Is that the only thing you think about in that head of yours?"

Tears were rolling down as she was amazed at his continuing frivolous behavior, but Lydia was slightly amused.

She couldn't understand herself why she had grabbed onto him without thinking about it. Only that, she didn't want to leave him by himself.

He had many comrades and friends with him if he were to look behind, but needed to look ahead and lead the way to guide them, which made him stand alone. Because in the leader's vision, there was no one else.

Even though he opened the way for the ones behind him, when he realized it, only Raven remained.

There was only the remaining doubt if he was able to be the hope for his comrades and friends, or if he was able to save them even a little, it was a feeling he wanted to believe but didn't know how.

The only thing he could sense was the heavy pressure on his shoulders that he was the only one who survived after their sacrifices.

She had the feeling like she was shown a glimpse of that heart of his, but that could just be her imagination, and she could just be tricked again, but she knew she didn't want to leave him alone.

".....It's because you looked lonely."

"Hmmm, so is that pity?"

"Don't think so high of yourself."

Even if they pressed their bodies together, it was so terribly cold, they could freeze to death.

"You're so warm."

"Huh, you're not cold?"

"Oh, no, that's not what I meant. Ah, but, this thing here has been keeping me warm."

"What is?"

The thing Edgar took out of his inner pocket was the tin can from some days ago.

Looking at it close, they could see that it was faintly glowing.

Although barely, it was pushing back the darkness of the fogman's domain.

"What is this....."

"It's a tin can."

"I know that, but....."

"Now that I remember, Raven had said something like this had been wanting to meet the fairy doctor."

"Are you saying that a tin can talked?"

"Well, since he was the blood of a mystical sprite running in his blood, he has a mysterious part about him."

Perhaps, that was why Raven, had been saying from the beginning that this tin can was Lydia's weapon.

Could he have realized that there was something fae inside it?

A tin can, or, really, the thing inside the tin can that was calling for Lydia.

The herb cooked fish? No, that couldn't be the power that was pushing back the fogman.

It was something that was sealed in a can, so it didn't have that strong a power. But, if it could fight against the fogman adequately, then could it the element of nature that this thing possessed?

.....The only elemental being who had the natural element to drive away a fogman could be a..

The answer suddenly occurred to Lydia.

The Rosemary leaves that Nico had been talking about! The thing that was inside this who was tricked by the bogey beast and trapped in the tin can of herbs was their nemesis!

It was a fairy who when it appeared, brought along the pleasant smell of the spring green, grass.

"Edgar, I think we can be saved! If we can open this can."

"I don't carry tools that open tin cans with me."

"Oh, yes, you're right."

Lydia was immediately disappointed.

In order for situations like this to not happen, she should have paid attention

around her for any signs of warning and think ahead and prepared, so that she could have maybe driven away the fogman. She had that chance, but because of Lydia's inexperience, she let that slip through.

"Ahh, dear lord, I'm such an idiot. I'm so hopeless."

"So, you do need to open this up in order to eat what's inside?"

"Oh, no, at least if we can open a hole in it. I don't think that's fish inside."

"It might explode, but how's this?" he said, and took out a pistol.

I wonder if what's inside will be all right, but that worry didn't apply to fairies, so she wasn't bothered.

"Let's give it a try."

"Lydia, stay back."

He placed the tin can near the ground. Lydia covered her ears and held her breath behind Edgar.

There was the sound of bullet fire and the can burst open.

In that instant, something came jumping out of it.

A powerful tornado erupted.

The wind pressed back the heavy fog that had engulfed the two of them and carried it up in a swirl, blasting it high up.

There was a groaning voice like rumbled like an earthquake, perhaps it was the fogman. An enormous black shadow looked like it was struggling to fight back the winds.

It was a black fog that swallowed up everything around it, melting everything away. But, now, it couldn't approach the two of them while it was wrapped up in the wind tunnel.

Because, when it touched the wind, its fog would melt and disperse. That was the rule of nature by the fairies.

The ball of fog that was controlled, still fought against the wind, trying to keep its form by creating a black whirl pool and used them to desperately attack anything it could.

They could hear screams that sounded like they came from Graham and his men.

The fog and mist was blown away but as it did it seemed to have engulfed

Graham and his men who were near by, as they were able to catch a glimpse of them.

But, more than that, the sight of the fog, that had absorbed them, was kicked and tossed up mercilessly by the wind, carrying the fog and the people and debris with it was enough to send shivers down one's spine.



Finally, the vision around them cleared up to reveal the area of the ship's bottom.

She looked for Nico as the wind was still blowing, and saw Rosalie and Doris, as well as Raven and was relieved to see that he was showing them away from the hungry grasp of the fog and leading them toward the safe area of the winds. The winds grew strong and violent once again, making Lydia unable to keep her eyes open and nearly fell over.

She was steadied by Edgar, and felt herself embraced in his arms, and heard the curses and damning words of the bogey beast as it was swept up by the wind and blown away out of sight.

When she was allowed to lift up her head, she was able to see a faint glimpse of the blue sky.

The storage room's ceiling had been broken through. The wind swirled around

the fog carrying further up into the vast skies.

She saw a faint glimpse of a pair of sky-colored winds that were as thin and transparent as the air.

"Sylph...." whispered Lydia.

Once the forerunner that was trapped inside the can, burst out into the skies, a swarm of the wind fairies, Sylphs came in huge numbers.

It was the coming of the spring winds.

They joined to become a blasting squall and blasted down from the upper skies across the top of the river waters that sat next to the city at once.

Feeling the heavy roll and sway but sensing that they were being protected by the sylphs, Lydia felt like she was inside a pleasant cradle.

When the last of the fogman's presence was dispersed by the wind, the wind fairies kept going and flew away into the far skies.

"Edgar, we're all right, now! We managed to escape from being swallowed up by the fogman!"

Her heart was filled with the relief and happiness of coming back to this world from the darkness inside the fogman that made Lydia let out an overjoyed shrill.

"Yes, it looks like it."

Edgar was safely here.

I'm so glad I didn't leave him alone.

Even if it was reckless or a hit-or-miss thing to do, she optimistically thought that when you had the feeling of wanting to help another, the miraculous power of the fairies would bless you.

It was Edgar's arms that were steadyng Lydia who nearly slumped to the floor from relief.

She realized that she had been grabbing ahold of him all this time, but even if his hand touched her cheek, she didn't feel any danger that would normally make her think she had to escape.

Perhaps, it was because he was unusually smiling at her with a peaceful look.

When the sunlight shined through, she gazed up close at his golden hair that was sparkling like pure solid gold and then her eyes were captured by his heart-melting, lascivious ash mauve eyes.

This distance and atmosphere seems, a little, dangerous.

Even though she thought that, she couldn't even hit him, but let him raise her head up as his fingers on her cheek guided her.

No, no, it's all right, Raven had said that Edgar wasn't that kind of person.

But.

Wait, hold on a minute.

I was told nothing would happen, Raven was such a...liar....?

His lips softly touched Lydia's forehead. And then he smiled at her happily.

"I guess I really do like caramel more. So much that I want to save it eat later."

The winds that blasted through London, blew away the smog that had been taking residence in the town, making the refreshing morning sun spread the spring air all around.

There were many sorts of rumors that flew about in regards to the disappearance of Lord Graham and the ones who had a hand in his criminal acts, but the truth remained unsolved, lost in the fog, so to speak.

It was unimaginable to Lydia what happened to those men who disappeared to the land of the dark along with the fogman.

The fogman as a fairy was unable to revive itself and disappeared from the human domain. There might once again be a time when it regains its power, but that would take a very long time.

With Graham's disappearance, Edgar had lost his chance to declare war against Prince, but unexpectedly, he appeared like that didn't matter any more.

Lydia couldn't tell if he had decided to give up his revenge, but after seeing Graham's outcome, perhaps he felt like he got his revenge.

Only, the one that Edgar wanted to exact his revenge on for the sake of his comrades, should have not been Graham, who was one of Prince's men but only the tip of the iceberg.

That's why, Lydia wanted to believe that he felt that revenge wasn't what he should been doing for the sake of his friends who died.

Anyways, the countermeasures and dealings that came afterwards were swiftly taken care of by Edgar, and the only thing that was made public was the news that Graham was the one who used up the Worpole baron family assets and

confided Lady Doris who had found that out and tried to make it appear like Rosalie was behind all of that.

In regards to Lydia and the beaten-up state of the interior of the ship, was explained that while Lydia was looking for the where-about of Doris who was her friend, and figured out that Graham's ship was suspicious. Edgar came along after she told him her story and tried to pay a visit to Graham's ship, but ended up creating a fight with the sailors on board...., or something like that.

The ones that came out alive were the hired sailors who weren't aware of the hidden details, and even if they knew they couldn't reveal about the smuggling, the ones left could only keep their mouths shut forever, said Edgar.

Hearing and seeing this part of him, she was reminded that he really was indeed a true scoundrel.

However, Lydia took Edgar's recommendation of taking three days off work for the sake of recovering from the horrifying case, but after that, she commuted to the earl's house in the usual state of no work waiting for her.

On that day, Rosalie and Doris had come to pay Lydia a visit.

Doris, who was put to sleep, of course didn't know about the rampage of the fogman, and Rosalie was manipulated so she didn't remember anything.

After the fogman and bogey beast disappeared, Rosalie woke up and found Doris who was unconscious and ran over, balling and crying.

She kept apologizing so much that it was getting annoying, and Doris didn't witness the sight of Rosalie clinging onto her, but there was no doubt that the two of them reconciled after that.

"Doris and I decided to spend some time in the countryside for a while," said Rosalie in her previously usual straight face.

"Since London is quite the boisterous face," said Doris, with a pleasant smile.

"Yes, I think that's best."

"I didn't agree to the countryside at first, since I hate being bored, but since Doris keeps saying that it'll be too lonely. She never grows out of acting like a child...."

Rosalie was her usual self, but when Doris edged her with her elbow, she whispered back "I know, I know," and changed her face to a serious one.

"Uh, I'm sorry for all the things. And, thank you for saving us. ...I just came to say this."

Unexpectedly, it seemed like Doris was the mature one of the two.

"I wasn't able to save you on my own. But, Miss Rosalie Worpole, I think it's best you don't get yourself involved with fairies anymore."

"I know.Sine that fairy egg and that fairy never protected me at all. I've learned that fairies are not to be trusted."

Oh, well, thought Lydia. The reason Rosalie came in contact with the bogey beast was because she got her hands on the 'fairy egg.' Since she wasn't born with the power to see fairies, there should be no more worry that she would be caught by evil-spirited fairies like that bogey beast.

"More importantly, Miss Carlton, would you like to come with us?"

"Huh?"

"I think we could become friends. If it was you, I wouldn't mind if you got along with Doris. There may be nothing in the countryside, but I think we wouldn't get bored if there were three friends together."

It seemed Rosalie was serious, as her eyes were twinkling.

"But, I still have something that I must do... But, of course, I think we could become friends."

"Hey, what is the real truth? Are you being threatened by Edgar? If you're being forced to work for him, then we were thinking that we need you rescue you out of here."

She lowered her head and hushed her voice to a whisper like she was taking about something secret.

"N-No, I'm fine. Nothing like that is happening."

"You can tell us the truth. We won't tell anyone."

"Uh, I really am not being threatened, so you don't have to worry."

"Rosalie, it isn't nice to prood."

When Doris said that, she looked like she wasn't satisfied, but she backed down.

"Then, would you come pay us a visit soon?"

"Yes, of course."

"My, my, you're not going to invite me?"

At the voice coming from the doorway, Rosalie and Doris went rigid.

"Oh, welcome back, Edgar. These two had just arrived to see me."

"Welcome, ladies. Please take your time."

At Edgar's happily smiling face, Rosalie's face went even more hard and tense.

"Oh, no, we'll take our leave now!"

"Oh, but you just came."

"I'm sorry, Miss Carlton But we don't have that much time. We'll send you a letter in due time!"

Rosalie was practically dragging along Doris and headed to the door, taking an excessively long way around Edgar.

Once she passed through the door, they dashed off without looking back.

"They didn't have to be that scared of me," mumbled Edgar in a displeased way.

"That's because they're scared."

"I understand Rosalie, but why would Lady Doris run away?"

"Of course, she must have gotten a good lecture from Doris just how much of an evil criminal you are."

He shrugged his shoulders a little, but didn't seem like he was bothered by the fact that he was loathed and dreaded by the ladies. More than that, he stared at Lydia like he was looking at some mysterious creature.

"You don't act scared. Didn't you hear from Rosalie?"

Her heart skipped a beat probably because he pinpointed what she herself was questioning over.

Of course, it wasn't like she heard the details, but if a man with a warm, friendly demeanor suddenly changed his attitude completely, then it was natural not to want to go near him. Depending on the situation, even Lydia might be put through the same experience. But now..

"As if that was news to me. I long knew that you were a criminal."

"However, you cried and dived into the arms of that criminal."

"That was, only because I was taken aback!"

"Oh, now, you don't have to dismiss the possibility so hard like that. Since that time, I've been thinking up something about you."

“What about me.”

“Yes, about the mysterious part about you. Didn’t everyone come out safe and alive thanks to you in the end. I used you with only my revenge in mind. And, yet, you still helped me, and even saved Doris and Rosalie who were nearly made into the victims of Grahams’s crooked scheme. In the long run, with those two coming out safe, I felt like I was twice saved by you. I think you indeed are my fairy of good fortune.”

It wasn’t something so glamorized as that. They were saved thanks to the sylphs and even that was a coincidence.

Good fortune....was unlikely. Lydia was a helpless fledgling.

“Hm? Did I say something to depress you?”

“Now that I remember, I also had something I was thinking about since then.”

“What?”

“I realized from this incident. That I’m much too much inexperienced and unprepared.”

Hearing her speak with a serious tone of voice, Edgar raised his brows up slightly.

“In this state, I shouldn’t be privately hired by the earl family...”

“Hold on just a moment, Lydia. Are you saying that you’re leaving?”

“I’ll go back to Scotland and study much more.”

“Where am I wrong? If there’s something you don’t like about me, then I’ll fix it. So, please don’t say that you want to end our relationship.”

“Why do you make it sound like a lover’s end.”

“Or, did you find a man you like? If that man is going to take you from me, then I’ll challenge him to a duel. If he isn’t a man who can die for you, then I don’t intend to withdraw.”

“Oh, stop fooling around!”

He must have sensed that he couldn’t sweep this under the carpet by playing fun, so he sat down on the nearby sofa in a tired manner.

“I’m not fooling around. Won’t you understand how much you’re needed to me?”

“But, I don’t make much use here as a fairy doctor.”

"You saved us all from the fogman."

"That was just coincidence."

"I need your honest and pure side probably more than you as a fairy doctor. If you, who taught me that I don't have to hate anyone anymore, left me, then who is going to comfort me?"

"I want to become a fully-fledged fairy doctor. Not a lover to comfort you."

"Lover! That sounds great. If you stay by my side, you'll change your mind."

He surely does show you the greatest most, seductive gaze.

However, the biggest flaw of Edgar was that there wasn't any serious feelings behind those eyes.

As usual, Lydia couldn't bring herself to believe the flirting way he spoke to her. His kiss on her forehead, was just his usual play, or perhaps a sign of friendship towards his comrade, or maybe..... At any rate, she remained confused and Lydia ended up accepting.

It seemed childish to be overly conscious so she pretended like she had forgotten, but when she would look up at his face, she was suddenly filled with embarrassment.

She was curious about what his intentions were, but she was also irritated at that part of herself, so she took the liberty and focused on thinking about herself as a fairy doctor.

"Edgar,I'm being serious."

"If you want to study to be able to stand on your feet, then couldn't you do that here?"

"The number and species of fairies are much too small in London. Even if I was the private hire of the earl family, there hardly isn't any work. And I didn't intent to be hired as your playmate, so this is all against my will."

"Do you perhaps want to work?"

He said it like that was completely unexpected, which made Lydia question him. What was this man thinking of me?

"Well, isn't becoming independent, meaning that one worked hard and built up experience."

"Why didn't you tell me that earlier."

Eh? In the short while she tilted her head in confusion, Edgar had called for Tomkins.

And he made his butler bring a box that he could barely carry in his arms and set it down in front of Lydia.

"What is this...."

"Petitions."

Inside the box was an overflowing number of letters.

"To put it simply, as soon as word got out to all of my small private estates that I am the heir to the earl family, letters came from numerous people who had been suffering and enduring from the troublesome relationships they had with fairies during the long absence of their lord writing appeals about the current state of affairs they were in. As might be expected, there surely are many fairy residents still living in the lesser estates of the Blue Knight Earl family instead of the fairylands."

Fairies are stealing our crops. They are making a ruckus on top of the roof in the middle of the night, they are monopolizing the well water, they are letting our livestock loose, they are planting footmarks on the laundry.....

There was a massive pile of letters written about the various kinds of troubles that fairy doctors were involved in from the old days.

"Why hadn't you shown me this sooner!"

"I was worried that you might get fed up and quit from the mountain of work that waited for you as soon as you started."

"Doesn't mean you had to tuck them away for weeks!"

The time she was lecturing him seemed wasteful so Lydia immediately transferred the whole box near the table by the window. Sitting down in the brightly lit area, she concentrated on running her eyes over the letters.

"But, Lydia, I really learned from this incident. When I go by the name of Blue Knight Earl, it means that I will be carrying the hatred towards my ancestors who had magical powers that is distinctly only in this family. According to your story, fairies apparently can live for hundreds of years and it seems like the successors of the earl title have all done things to chastened and punished the bad fae. Which means, it doesn't matter if a new humans succeeds the name,

as there still may be fairies like that fogman who hold grudges against the earl."

"Sorry, but can you wait till later?"

She wanted to concentrate on the letters. As soon as possible, she needed to gather up ways to deal with all the issues and send out replies. Lydia felt the excitement build up in her from the challenge, making her completely absorbed in the papers.

"It's all right, there's still plenty of time for the two of us. Since as long as I'm earl, I can't allow you to run away."

Of course, she wasn't listening.

Raven walked in with tea prepared. Watching the young man set out the tea cups with dutiful, practiced hands, Edgar smiled in a cheerful way.

"It looks like I evaded the talk about ending our relationship."

"Very well, my lord."

"By the way, Raven, who won over the bet on the kiss?"

He looked over towards Lydia by the windowsill like he was concerned if she was listening.

"She can't hear you right now."

"It was a tie. Because, Lord Edgar had ended it in such a half-hearted way."

"Are you angry?"

"No. I have the heart to follow any order I am given. Only, I cannot think that it is that difficult for you to win a kiss from Miss Carlton by going through the trouble of making me bring up a bet and lowering her guard."

"That's because Lydia overly tenses up when I get too near. I'd feel like I'm doing a terrible, evil thing if I were to break through that wall."

"It's plenty evil."

There was a voice from the doorway. A cat standing on its two hind legs had spoken to them. Or he thought.

"Oh? I just wanted to get more closely acquainted with Lydia. Don't you think a man and a woman can get more intimate with just one kiss than a hundred words?"

"And yet, you let that precious chance slip by?" asked Raven.

It seemed like Raven was indeed a little bit frustrated. He had worked so hard in

carrying out the silly order he was given by Edgar and managed to get Lydia to agree to a bet, but that child-like kiss made all of his efforts go down the drain. However, for Raven who couldn't quite convey his feelings that well, this was a well-welcomed silver lining.

Planting his cheek in his palm, Edgar released a happy smile.

"I do feel sorry for putting you through such trouble in a field you are most weak in. But, how do you say it, Lydia at that time was unusually wide open, it made me feel like it was the bad thing to do to pander into that."

It really was a feeling like he just couldn't waste something at some casual opportunity. Like the best timing to open your favorite wine was the moment that was just right for it.

"Hmm, so you do have a rational mind. I thought you did anything at anytime you wanted to."

Nico had approached them and then jumped up onto a chair that sat circled around the table. Looked like he was going to participate in their tea time.

Without hesitation, Raven placed a cup in front of the cat who wore a necktie like it was the natural thing to do.

However absurd it was for a cat to gracefully sip tea, or open its mouth to talk annoyingly back to him, Edgar was gradually loosing his sense of resistance to it.

"Nico, don't treat me like I'm some kind of wild animal."

"A wild animal doesn't go into heat all-year-around."

Raven looked like he faintly laughed.

There were magical and mysterious things that happened every day around Lydia. It wasn't like Edgar was able to see the sight of the fogman, but he did witness the peculiar fog and wind act in a way that couldn't be described as a natural phenomenon.

When he was with her, his eyes would be opened to a world he never knew about.

Lydia's sense of the world was far removed from the savage and inhumane reality Edgar was familiar with, and it blew inside to him like the sylph spring winds. And then, she pulled him out of the fog.

From inside the deep fog that he had lost his way in from eight years ago.

Many others in the same circumstances had died and Edgar remained alive. He had felt tormented by that, but when Lydia had stayed by his side even when he had been swallowed by the fogman, he had been released from that.

Lydia, who was unrelated to Edgar's past, when the girl who had no obligation to help him, cried and said she was sorry as she held onto him, he felt like the weak part of him was supported by those slender, soft arms of hers.

If there was someone who wouldn't leave him even till the end, then he thought like it wasn't a sin to be the only one who survived.

It was a warm savior's hand that was held out to him, who was only hatred and regret.

Even if the peaceful, springtime afternoon wasn't going to last forever, he wished that a day like this, basking in the spring sunshine, would last just a little while longer.

Glancing over to Raven who quietly placed a teacup at Lydia's side, Edgar let out a whisper.

"At this rate, it looks like I won't get any attention for quite a while."

"Is that why you hid the letters?" said Nico.

With a silver spoon in one paw, the gray-haired cat stirred his tea that was filled with delicious milk.

"Oh, well, as long as she will remain here, I guess I can endure."

Just then, he lifted up his head to realize that there was one more teacup set out for someone in an open spot next to Nico.

A harmonious spring breeze drifted in from the open window, lifting up and twirling the caramel-colored hair of Lydia and the light blue curtains.

A flower petal that was brought in by the sylph wind floated down to land inside the tea.

Credits

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